

GAMEROOM

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March 2008 \$5.95
Volume 20, Number 3

Cabaret

Luna City Arcade

Peter Hirschberg's amazing home game room

GameRoom 2007 Survey Results

Readers share their opinions

The Pinball Art of Keith Elwin

Amazing pinball photographs

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Pinball Pal is the exclusive source for Shay Arcade Group reproduction backglasses and playfield plastics. For a complete list of available items, call, write, email or log on to <http://pinballpal.com/shay>.

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Advance
Information

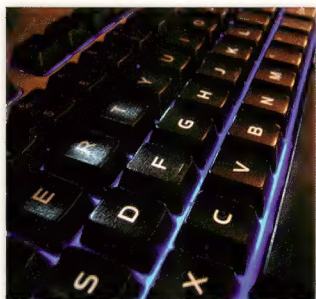
GSound Enhanced Sound Card for Gottlieb® System 1 & System 80 Pinball Machines

GSound is a replacement sound board for many Gottlieb® System 1 and System 80 pinball machines. GSound replaces the original unreliable and hard-to-repair sound board with a new design that adds a number of new features. All sounds are stored on removable and re-writable Flash Memory cards. Original factory-style sounds can be stored on the card as well as custom sounds installed by the user. Games that originally came with primitive beeps and bleeps can be upgraded to play any sound at all - speech, music, and more.

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CHAOS CENTRAL

Passion, perseverance, and plain old perspiration form the basis of all great achievements

Almost all great achievements are born of one man with a vision and a determination to see that vision through, no matter the odds. Of course, there have been many great failures with the same formula, but history generally only remembers the successful lunatics.

We've got a special "lunatic" this month: Peter Hirschberg, a man so dedicated to the arcade glories of the past that he has built what has to be considered one of the most spectacular home game rooms ever—a massive personal arcade dedicated to preserving his favorite video games. The name of his creation? *The Luna City Arcade* (get it? Luna? Lunatic? He's not crazy, but I may be!) Peter didn't just stop with creating what may be the world's best home arcade...not by a long shot. From his retrogaming radio station to his work on the upcoming documentary *Chasing Ghosts*, Peter's been busy keeping the 80's alive.

Don't worry if you're a fan of another decade: we've got much more in this issue, covering past, present, and future, including your feedback from the 2007 GameRoom Reader Survey. It was such a success I hope to have one every year—everyone was so candid and honest their replies—it can only help make the magazine even better. Thanks!

The Game is Never Over,

Kevin Steele, Editor



Now *that's* what I call multiball! See more of Keith Elwin's amazing pinball photographs on page 42!

Still looking for cool restorations, a great game room, or just a coin-op addiction you'd like to confess. Send me your photos and story at info@gameroommagazine.com.

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GameRoom

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(*) - Look For That Show's Ad Inside This Issue
Dates and Locations Subject to Late Change. Contact Promoter To Confirm

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- * 1st SUPER AUCTIONS Orlando, FL Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 1st SUPER AUCTIONS Akron, OH Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 8th-9th VICTORIAN CASINO ANTIQUES Las Vegas, NV www.VCAAuction.com
- * 8th AUCTION GAME SALES Winston Salem, NC Rick Parsons (800) 551-0660
- * 14-16th TEXAS PINBALL FESTIVAL Grapevine, TX Craig Hassell (214) 632-5537 texaspinball.com
- * 15th SUPER AUCTIONS Dallas, TX Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 21st-22nd 5th FAIRFAX PINBALL OPEN, Fairfax, VA www.virginiaipinball.com
- * 26th SUPER AUCTIONS Major Family Entertainment Center (see site: superactions.com after March 1st)
- * 29th-30th MIDWEST GAMING CLASSIC Milwaukee, WI www.midwestgamingclassic.com

April 2008

- * 2nd-3rd CHICAGO GAMEROOM & NOSTALGIA SHOW Kane County, IL Marge Skala (630) 881-4176
- * 4-6th CHICAGOLAND ADVERTISING, SLOT & JUKEBOX SHOW St. Charles, IL Kevin Greco (815) 353-1593 www.chicagolandshow.com
- * 5th AUCTION GAME SALES Winston Salem, NC Rick Parsons (800) 551-0660
- * 5th SUPER AUCTIONS St. Louis, MO Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 11th-13th ROCHESTER GAMEROOM SHOW Rochester, New York www.RochesterGameRoomShow.com
- * 12th SUPER AUCTIONS Detroit, MI Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 18th-19th PINBALL AT THE ZOO, Kalamazoo, MI www.pinballatthezoo.com
- * 26th SUPER AUCTIONS Milwaukee, WI Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000

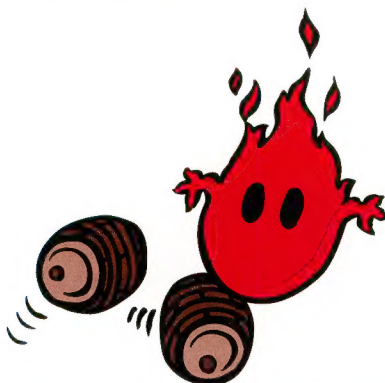
May 2008

- * 2nd-4th PINBALL WIZARDS CONVENTION Allentown, PA Denise Hein (610) 779-6810 www.pinballwizardsconv.com
- * 3rd-4th MAY DAY PINBALL TOURNAMENT Hopkins, MI www.maydaytournament.com
- * 10th SUPER AUCTIONS Private Auction (see site: superactions.com after May 1st)
- * 17th SUPER AUCTIONS Pismo, CA Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 24th SUPER AUCTIONS Dallas, TX Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 31st SUPER AUCTIONS Major Family Entertainment Center (see site: superactions.com after May 1st)

June 2008

- * 7th SUPER AUCTIONS Orlando, FL Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 14th SUPER AUCTIONS Knoxville, TN Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 21st SUPER AUCTIONS San Jose, CA Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000
- * 28th SUPER AUCTIONS Charlotte, NC Rob Stormont (714) 535-7000

Stay Tuned: More 2008 Events Coming Soon!



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MARCH

- 1 Yucaipa, CA**
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- 1 Orlando, FL**
Central Florida Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall, 4603 W. Colonial Dr.
- 1 Akron, OH area**
Emidio Expo Center, 48 E. Bath Rd., Cuyahoga Falls, OH
In conjunction with the 4th Annual Ohio Pinball & Gameroom Festival — See Website or Call for More Info!
- 8 Lakewood, CO**
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- 8 Tempe, AZ**
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The Arcade Store, 1842 E. Encanto Drive, Tempe, AZ
- 15 Dallas, TX Area**
Rodeo Center, Exhibit Hall A, 1818 Rodeo Dr., Mesquite, TX
- 22 Major Family Entertainment Ctr**
Plus Real Estate; See website March 1st for details

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SPECIAL AUCTION!

APRIL

- 5 St. Louis, MO area**
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- 12 Detroit, MI**
Michigan State Fairgrounds, 1120 W. State Fair Dr., Community Arts Bldg.
- 26 Milwaukee, WI area**
WI State Fair Park, Prod. Pavilion Bldg., 8100 Greenfield Ave., West Allis, WI

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ALL CONSIGNORS PAID NIGHT OF AUCTION

MAY

- 10 Private Auction**
See website May 1st for details
- 17 Pomona, CA**
L.A. Fairplex, 1101 W. McKinley Ave., Bldg. 5, Pomona, CA
- 24 Dallas, TX Area**
Rodeo Center, Exhibit Hall A, 1818 Rodeo Dr., Mesquite, TX
- 31 Major Family Entertainment Ctr**
See website May 1st for details

SPECIAL AUCTION!

SPECIAL AUCTION!

JUNE

- 7 Orlando, FL**
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- 14 Knoxville, TN**
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Santa Clara Fairgrounds, Gateway Hall, 344 Tully Rd.
- 21-22 Los Angeles, CA**
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- 28 Charlotte, NC**
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Questions?
Comments? Rants?
Raves?

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Kevin,
I've had some pictures that I keep forgetting to send. First is Peyton and Nathan with their Christmas present: Punchy the Clown. Then I have Peyton in the shop. I cut him totally loose for the first time with a machine. Glass is out and he's in total control of everything on the inside. He's making quite the pinball mechanic!

—Rob Craig

Hi there,
Great magazine, great writing, and I really enjoy the GameRoom News section... make my own Atari 2600 label?? Awww right!

Anyway, I wanted to pass on some helpful information I put together for a day-trip to Las Vegas to visit Tim's Pinball Hall of Fame. Like I said, I flew in for a day-trip, and brought only cash for quarters, a burger, and bus fare. As easy as it was, the bus is a great and inexpensive way to get directly from McCarran Airport to the PHoF. If you choose to print this in your magazine, hopefully others will find this helpful as well.

Downloadable maps can be found at www.rtcsonthernnevada.com. Price is \$1.25 which, if I remember correctly, is for a day.

1. Exit McCarran Airport on Ground Level Zero and head to the bus stop
2. Take Maryland Parkway (109) Line North (labeled G) to the Tropicana Blvd. stop (labeled F)
3. Transfer to Tropicana (201) Line East
4. Get off at the Pecos stop (labeled G)
5. PHoF is across the street (can't miss the sign at the strip mall)

Simply take the reverse route to get back to the airport (the pickup spot will now be on the same side as the PHoF).

Thanks again for a great magazine, — Bryan



Kevin,

It was great to meet you at the Heartland Supershow in Illinois. Anyways, I am sending you a picture that I thought might be of interest to readers. Danielle and Andrew were at the auction with her Dad and husband. Andrew did not cry once at the auction. He enjoyed all the sounds around him. Her Dad owns a coin-op arcade and they have a bunch of games in their house too.

Thanks, Bob Graham

BoB G's PINBALL

Pictures of Pinball Machines on this Link.

www.members.aol.com/bobgspinball



PLEASE BUCKLE UP!

On the morning of January 13, 2008, at 6:15am, who would expect a car to run a stop sign and try turning left onto the road on which you are travelling? I certainly didn't. This guy just came from nowhere and was doing in excess of 40mph. Add that to my 35 to 40mph and that made a near head on impact of about 80mph. I was badly bruised from head to foot including stitches in my lacerated left knee. Considering that I had no broken bones, this means that, without a doubt, the seat belt kept me from being crushed. That seat belt saved my life!

Each and every one of our pinball family is precious and so I pass this experience on to you with hopes that you will always buckle up. The photos should help convince you.

— Bruce Moyer



Kevin,

I just read Scott Voisin's interview with Gary Stern and would like to drop a few comments. But before I do, let me quickly note a few facts so you know where I'm coming from. I've been an operator, I am an active collector from way back when auction games were sold for hundreds instead of thousands. I have bought NIB machines. And I've been to a lot of pinball shows and heard a lot of industry speakers. I'm not an insider, yet I've known a few Stern employees, distributors, and operators for more than a decade. I'm telling you all of this to hopefully validate a bit of what I'm going to say.

I've heard Gary's responses before, a couple of times at different Expo talks spanning the years since Williams / Bally closed their pinball division. Almost nothing has changed. The words that are spoken seem to indicate that there is no good reason why any other company would build a pinball machine. That no one else would ever get in the manufacturing game. The idea is often produced that if Stern gives up pinball, no one will ever do it — it's just not worth the effort. I disagree with all of those statements.

Since Stern became a monopoly in 1999, I've seen a lot of their machines pulled out of the box or shortly afterwards. And the trend in quality and completeness bothers me greatly. Before, when Stern was Sega, they hardly produced



Kevin, I saw this money holder in a catalog, and thought your readers might be interested—I've already ordered one!

— Dan Marquardt

a title that was “fun” as Gary calls it. The designs were shallow, the rules shallow, the product sub-par to the Williams / Bally machines in almost every way. Look at the re-sale prices of these machines. I can summarize with ‘not-so great’ and cover it well enough. Then, as Williams/Bally designers were on the open market, they were forced to seek employment from Gary, or give up doing something they loved.

Enter Pat Lawlor. While South Park and Harley were good licenses during the transition, they don’t particularly translate into great games. I don’t think it was until Monopoly with the big PLD logo that “fun” really entered a Stern playfield. Later, Steve Ritchie, George Gomez, and Dennis Nordman – all proven talent, joined in with something new to contribute. Yet some of the machines still seem to lack the polish that these great designers produced in years past. Have they lost some of their eye for a great game? Or have they been forced to operate with a businessman that installs constraints with what they can design in a machine? I’m not talking about the normal accounting cuts after a machine has a bill of materials. I’m talking about forced design models or templates. Maybe I’m wrong, or over-reacting. But my gut says that I’m not.

Today, it has been estimated that home sales at or over 50% and rising! Amazing, and Gary attests to this in the interview. Since these games are surely under a much closer examination in the home than they would ever be in public, how in the world can Stern release machines with software that is hardly finished? Spider-Man is a very good game, but that software was far from done when the first machine arrived at our local operator.

I would never blame a designer or programmer for that problem. They don’t make the decision to put a game into production. Owners in these cases are forced to scramble after each new release of software when it hits the Stern web site. And nothing is different with Wheel of Fortune. Yet more of these are going into homes than ever before? Does the ability to upgrade via a thumbdrive make this somehow OK? As for the public games of late, one of my operator contacts has yet to take the time to install a single update from a thumbdrive.

Gary thinks that the majority of these home sales don’t go to collectors. I can’t help but think that he is dead wrong, unless we disagree on the definition of a collector. I group anyone who has more than 1 coin-operated machine into the collector category.

That could be 1 pinball, 1 video, and a pool table as far as I’m concerned. I sincerely hope that even if this is the first pinball machine that someone buys, that they actually enjoy it enough to buy another. But here’s my question for Gary – if you think that these are people who will play their machine for 2 weeks and then only turn it on twice more per year, what kind of impression is your product making on them? Don’t you want these customers to catch the fever that collectors have and buy more products later?

I really don’t think there are that many people around that have thousands to burn on pinball machines just to turn them into a place to put their coats, or store boxes. There are other forms of entertainment that can be had at less than \$4000 that take less space, and would get a lot more use if these people were not collectors of some caliber. His comment just doesn’t make sense.

After the close of Williams, Gary (and many others) has often said of himself that he is the “last man standing”. We all were glad

“How in the world can Stern release machines with software that is hardly finished?”

of it, especially when he brought on good designers. But I ask you, what did he have to lose? With his only competition gone and the ability to pick up some great designers that were already proven winners, how could he lose? As the last man standing, you have the entire pinball market (both private and public) to GAIN, and nothing to lose to a competitor.

I don’t see this decision as one that deserves a single pat on the back. It is indeed a smart business move, one that was a no brainer. Sure, the entire industry could have tanked. But the trend looked much better. The ignored home collector numbers grew, pinball shows grew, and the used pinball prices increased. Anyone that fed the demand for new pinball would make money.

But since this is indeed a monopoly, the machines scream “cheap” and there isn’t much we can do about it. What do collectors, operators, or distributors think of the playfield clearcoat on the Stern machines? While I can’t speak for everybody, I can say

that I’ve never heard anyone applaud the finish. This translates directly into playfield wear. Good idea if operators are the main customer and if you’re in the business to sell more pinball machines to replace their worn out machines. But with 50% or so going to the home, and the demand for high-quality clearcoats on used machines, I am not surprised when I hear that a crazed collector bought his new machine and immediately tore it apart to get a proper clearcoat applied. Sure, it’s not the norm, but important enough for some and needed by every machine leaving the company. The cabinets are another area that I feel could use some serious improvement. The routing jobs on these things look horrible. Speaker panel areas have always looked cheap to me. I could go on, but I realize that you are too busy for me to rant any longer.

Let me quickly add one more thought. Gary quotes the cost of just art changes on Dale Jr. at \$250,000 over 600 machines. Do the math, that’s an additional \$420 per machine. BUT, the playfield design and 98% of the software is already complete and paid for. Yes there was some nickel plated trim and a polished lock bar. But if there wasn’t money to make, Gary wouldn’t have ran the machine at all. These machines cost the end-user more too. Thing along these same lines with the new black Spiderman machine, in limited production. History has proven that rare machines that are ‘fun’ make great collectors pieces. It’s too bad that he’s missing everything else.

I just want to say that I think Gary is disconnected with the actual end customer of his product. If home buyers are really becoming the cash cow, maybe he should start pushing his products at pinball shows and send someone else to the big amusement shows. And that ego that has been presented at Expo has got to go. When you know more than your customer, you pretty much spell out disaster for your future sales.

Should someone else make pinball? Absolutely! There are still some big coin-op arcade players or pushed-out pinball industry people that could do it. And most importantly, it would no longer be last man standing, but instead the one that produced the best product, the product that connects with the end customer would win.

I am really sorry for the rant. And if you are reading this far, I congratulate you.

If you decide to print this crazy rant of mine, please remove my name so the bystander (me) remains protected! (Done, Ed) 

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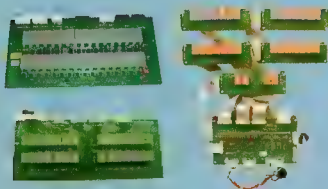


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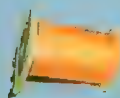


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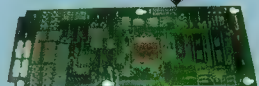
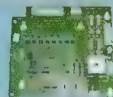
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Parts, Armatures

Plastic Posts, Wafers, Ramps
Lamp Domes, Buttons

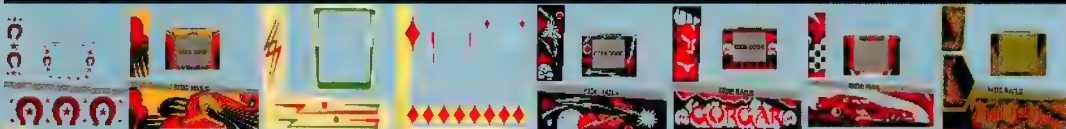


Game hardware—coil
stops, mechanisms, etc

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We ship worldwide daily—most orders shipped same day!



Pinball Cabinet Stencil Sets !!!!!

Dozens of titles in stock - Adding new titles monthly
Repaint your cabinets—make your game look like new!



GameRoom News

Compiled by
Mitch Gerson



I'm proud to say that this is one of my most eclectic monthly news articles to date. I've got you covered from furniture to a gaming vest that will literally beat you up.

Each month I scour the globe via the web looking for unusual items and products that you simply need to know more about, and I think that this month is a doozie.

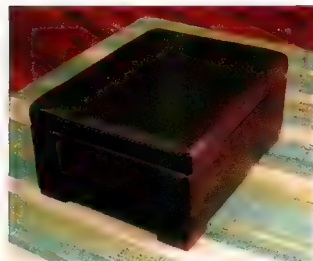
Read on and enjoy... I have some oddball items, but fun items, this month for sure.

INSERT COIN TO CONTINUE, Mitch

The George Costanza Ottoman



Ok, that's not really the name but it might as well be. Remember that episode where George buys a Lazy-Boy chair with a refrigerator built in (and other amenities?). Well your wish is granted and you too can live the good life in the form of an ottoman by Salamander Designs.



I'm not sure this is right for me, but if you have the space and interest this may be a great addition for your game room (or living room?)

As per the press release here are the specs:

"The unique Jump Seat Ottoman unfolds to reveal a hide-away theater seat that can be used as a secondary or extra seat for watching movies or playing video games. The Jump Seat features a sturdy, patent pending mechanism that helps the top smoothly rise into a vertical position, revealing a padded seat and backrest. The generously sized seat is 21.5 inches wide x 14.5 inches deep, with the back rest 22 inches high. A cup holder and a small compartment for remote controls or game controllers rest along the seat's right-hand side. The seat is available in 14 leathers, 10 Microsuedes."

Um, ok. Well if you must have it, be sure to check for an authorize retailer on the web. Pricing is not yet set.



Read more about it on their official website:
www.salamanderdesigns.com

Pinball Wizard's Wish Granted

Well this may be late, but it was so heart-warming and wonderful to read about I thought I would be sure to include it in the news. In December, a company in LA called Oversee.net helped the Make A Wish foundation make a child's dream come true in the form of a handicapped-accessible pinball machine. The pinball machine was featured

at the Abilities Expo in 2007 and the child's parent thought it would be ideal for her son. As you can imagine he was thrilled when he received the very generous present.



According to the press release:

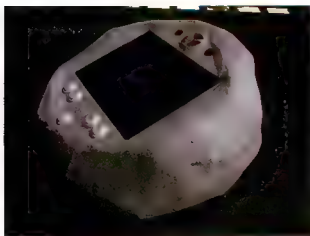
"Ryan, a 5th grader from West Palm Dale who turned 11 on Dec. 2, was born with arthrogryposis and severe scoliosis, making it difficult for him to move his joints and compromising his respiratory function. Ryan has undergone over 25 surgeries since birth including his most recent spinal fusion surgery in early October 2007. Just prior to his most recent hospital stay, his mother decided to contact the Make-A-Wish Foundation, knowing that Ryan would wish for the adaptive pinball machine he discovered at an Abilities Expo in June 2007. The machine plugs into his wheelchair, enabling him to play using the micro-switches on his chair, which he did for hours when he first laid eyes on the machine at the Expo."

Read more about Ryan's story here:
<http://tinyurl.com/28x4uh>

Asteroid-Shaped Game System

This totally reminds me of the old days when arcade designers were interested in making a cabinet look like something other than a big box. For example remember the "Jaws" game? If not, it was shaped like a shark and the monitor was attached to its gaping jaws. Well while this cabinet is not a commercial cabinet, it is just as impressive and creative as it was a home built project by the very

clever "dmworking247" who recently featured it over at BYOAC (arcadecontrols.com).



As per the designer:

I created an "Asteroid" rock made out of paper Mache and painted with two types of 'stone effect' spray-paint, hosting a stripped down laptop/LCD with a 5 button configuration (left/right games only). It also features function buttons (power, credit, p1 start, p2 start (which I might change to a pause key), and ESC), can be run on the laptop battery.

Games include—Asteroids, Bubble Bobble, Joust, Moon Patrol and more.

Here are the specs:

- Newspaper & PVA Glue: \$10
- Cans of spray paint: \$18
- Look on my wife's face when I announced I was building a 'rock' to host the game "Asteroids": Priceless.

See and read more:
<http://tinyurl.com/yt55rq>

Mario Meets his Doom



Where will the madness end? In yet another very clever skin created for the game Doom, a talented programmer has re-imagined the 1st level of Super Mario Brothers in 3D via the Doom gaming engine.

I have to say it's really clever and all of the sound effects are intact. It looks like it might actually be fun, in a bloodthirsty killer kind of way. So if you're ready to explore your dark side, be sure to check out this video clip: <http://tinyurl.com/2qnstn>

GroovyGameGear is at it again

Man, does Randy Turner at Groovy Game Gear ever sleep? This is truly a man possessed and we all can enjoy the fruits of his labor once again in these two new product offerings.

I own a few of his items and Randy takes an incredible amount of time and care in the building of his products. If you like to mod and tinker with your arcade cabinets, or are building one, you may need one or more of the following new products:



TurboTwist High-Low™

GroovyGameGear is proud to present the first and only high-resolution Arcade spinner with Up / Down capability, the TurboTwist High-Low™. It's so small; the entire unit can fit in the palm of your hand. Switch actuation has been tuned for a short throw, with just the correct amount of resistance to ensure positive actuation only when intended.

Features:

- DOT inspired, 1.5" diameter solid Stainless-Steel knob, with familiar concentric circle pattern, is included at no extra charge!
- 1200 transitions per revolution provides full coverage for any spinner or paddle game, including those demanding racing and Arkanoid-style games.
- TT-HL is top surface mounted via the integrated mounting plate and knob height is adjustable.

Price for the Master unit (includes interface board) will be \$129.95. You can pick it up right here if you want one:

<http://tinyurl.com/3dk7kk>

4-way restrictor

Turn your IL / HAPP SUPER Joystick into a true, physically-restricted 4-way.

- Included hardware allows mounting to existing holes in joystick body.
- Provides longer throw 4-way operation than mechanically switchable joysticks can provide.



Order yours here for only \$4.95:
<http://tinyurl.com/34a6bh>

Pixel Pillows



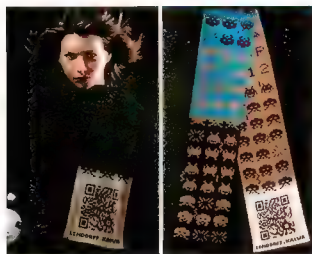
So fluffy and so beautiful. Nick over at Ret-roblast.com covered this artist recently and because of him I ended up ordering a full set of Pac Man pillows. Man, these look really cool to me (yes, we know, I'm a geek); and I can't wait to get them. The artist goes by the name "Rapunzel" as in the gal with the long hair over at the artist site etsy.com.



I contacted her and you can look forward to a full artist's interview in an upcoming issue of GameRoom. She'll make just about anything, but she prefers to use retro characters, as they're easier to replicate via the pixel

patterns. If you visit her site below you'll see a ton of her projects (new and old). Pillows start at under \$25, and that seems like a bargain for the work to me. Check it all out here:
www.etsy.com/shop.php?user_id=5219875

Retro Scarf



"Screaming" from Arcadecontrols.com pointed it out this super spiffy Retro Scarf that just shouts "buy me". But, alas, it may be you who's shouting as someone beats you up for wearing it. Personally, I think it's really cool and great for those chilly winter days. What better way to ward off the winter chill than cuddling up with one of these babies?

Order yours here before it's too late (i.e.- Winter's almost over and you'll have to wait for next year to wear this beauty):
<http://lendorff.kaywa.com/>

TOP 50 ARCADE CABINETS



"Jacktucky" sent in this fun and retro related article link from lmockery.com. The article covers, as per its title, what the author feels are the top 50 arcade cabinets of all time. The article is a fun read and he's included cabinet shots of all of the machines in question.

While I for one, don't necessarily agree with all of the author's musings, it is worth a read when you have the time. For example, he's listed Space Invaders as #50, and I always really loved that particular cabinet. It's so retro (50's) and modern for it's time, I thought it deserved a higher ranking, but what do I know? There were definitely a few that I've forgotten about that were fun to see in the list. Remember "Caveman"?... I certainly didn't!

See what you think of the list right here:

<http://www.i-mockery.com/minimocks/50arcadecabinets/>

Animated Pong T-Shirt



The good folks over at Thinkgeek.com have introduced this amazing animated Pong T-Shirt for only \$24.95.

Ok, here's the big let down, it doesn't really play Pong, it just flashes through a simulated sequence (over and over) that makes it appear as if a game is being played. In my book, that's still pretty cool. As per their write up:

"...we present to you this fine Animated Retro Table Tennis Shirt

Simply pop two AAA batteries into the concealed pack, push a button and voila! Amazing animated glowing old skool gaming on your chest. The two automated computer players are very talented and never seem to miss a shot... but you might want to watch for several hours just to be sure."

\$25 bucks?, I'm in:
<http://www.thinkgeek.com/tshirts/gaming/8e31/>

Dreamcast EBay Collection Sold for \$1800.

Hmmm. \$1800? Really? Well this was billed as the "world's only 100% complete" Sega Dreamcast collection so perhaps this is kinda' cool. But \$1800. Cool? For the geek who has to have it all, this sweet collection sold after a just a few days on-line and I thought it was worth a news mention.

As per the listing on EBay:

"You will get every single Sega Dreamcast game that has been released in the US (that's 247 unique games). These are all complete with cases and manuals. There are absolutely no stickers, writing, or tears on any of them. The cases also have no cracks whatsoever since I've replaced all the bad ones with brand new ones. These are all original black-label and white-label releases (no Sega All Stars budget versions)."



That ended up costing the lucky winner about \$7.28 per game plus shipping. I guess you can justify that. Yeah.

Golden Tee Lottery Tickets

I'm not a golfer, but I recognize that this is one of the most popular bar games of all time (right up there with the Hunting games) so it was only a matter of time before this came out. So, ok, if I understand the series of events here—first there was golf, then a video game about golf and now a lottery ticket based on a video game version of golf.

Phew. That's exhausting.



As per the press release:

"Golden Tee and the Illinois Lottery have teamed up to create a Golden Tee Golf Instant Ticket where players can win up to \$25,000 in cash or their very own Golden Tee machine - instantly!"

Gun Game Arcade



GameRoom reader John Schlarb submitted an interesting link to a website that produces those full size Shooting Galleries that you see at amusement parks. I've never thought to look up a company like this, but I was impressed at the sheer number of versions that "Amusement Electronics" produces.

From Pirates to a Jungle Hunt theme and more you can pick from a multitude of different scenarios. John mentioned that Jungle Hunt was his favorite, and I've always enjoyed these styles of shooting galleries in general.

If you're curious, check out the full assortment for fun over here:
<http://www.amusementelectronics.com/galleries.html>

If you're lucky enough to have one of these for personal use, I would love to see a photo!

It's a bird! It's a plane... No, it's Super Pool Table!



Well it may not have super powers (perhaps it does?); but this pool table does look pretty sweet. But, what exactly makes it super?—I guess that comes from the very unusual specs that include such items as an LCD TV set, stereo with flat paneled speakers, games/DVD player, library rack, ball storage rack and of course a mirror backed Bar. Oh yeah, you can play a game of pool on it too.

Some of the more typical pool table features include:

- Cushion Rails fitted with inserted aluminum strips.
- Cloth, From Strachan & Co of Gloucestershire, West of England – the finest available.
- Top fitting pocket brasses – brushed chrome.



No price is listed, but I think it's obvious this won't be cheap. Order yours today over here:
www.heironsmith.com.au/executive.html

Refresh your Atari Box Collection



"Missioncontrol" submits this item for your approval from the site [atariage.com](http://www.atariage.com). Apparently, one of the folks over there has posted a tutorial on the fine art of recreating from scratch Atari 2600 boxes. All you need is a printer, some basic supplies, a computer and a ton of time and patience.

The results are really phenomenal and you would be hard pressed to tell the difference between his repro boxes and originals.

If you have the time and need to bring some of your old boxes back to life, be sure to check out the on line posting right here:

<http://www.atariage.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=119903>

Another Home-built Star Wars Cabinet

A few issues ago, I gushed lovingly about a fully scratch built Star Wars arcade cabinet by an obsessed fan. I was envious in the ingenuity of their creation and apparently, Fabrice Montupet from France, has gone a step further with that absolutely stunning modern twist on this arcade classic.



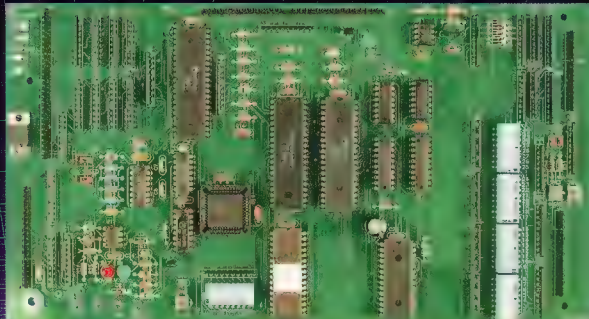
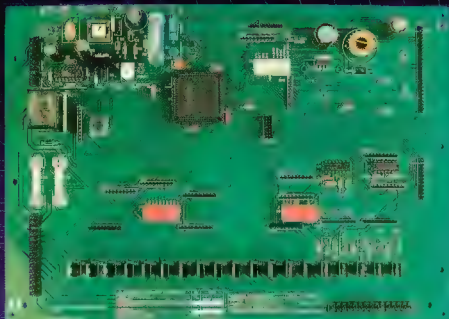
He's built everything from scratch including the Yoke itself, which is pretty nifty. If Star Wars were to be re-released today, I imagine it would have looked very similar to this.



The website is in French, but Google did it's best to translate it for you right here:
<http://tinyurl.com/2xrz8s>

Alltek Systems' Ultimates

Replacement Boards that go beyond the originals!



Ultimate Solenoid Driver Board

Modern switching power supplies: High efficiency, less heat, no more big heat sinks. Keeps the backbox cooler. Upgrade your game with modern technology. Short circuit protection on the high and low voltage power supplies. Forget about blowing a fuse every year. No high voltage power supply because of one bad display.

Low voltage power supply. No more blown LED's, displays — there is even an extra LED for each solenoid. LED status indicators on all voltages.

Using the latest MOSFET devices for solenoid drivers.

Lower on resistance MOSFET drivers means more responsive coils — better, faster pinball action!

All Solenoid MOSFET drivers have dual function LED indicators that indicate proper operation as well as indicating a fault condition such as a shorted coil. Makes game repair fast and easy — this is a must have diagnostics board. Fixed flippers for added flipper circuit protection. No more blown board traces from a miswired coil.

MPU fault protection circuit. Protects solenoid drivers and coils from shorts caused by a faulted MPU locking on a solenoid.

Heartbeat status LED.

No obsolete components used.

Ultimate MPU Board

- Over voltage protection circuit.
- Auto-resettable fuse protection.
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- Ultimate model "Easy" and "Sexy" pinball machines are reproduced in a single board. No need for a second board.
- The most common of all replacement boards for Bally and Stern. Just select the game you want using a dipswitch.
- Replacement board for Bally and Stern 100, 101, and 200 series games.
- Only replacement board that includes Free Play software for all Bally machines.
- No need for batteries: 100-Year Non-volatile Data Retention.
- All ICs are in machined sockets.
- The best after-sales support and warranty in the business with over 40 years of experience.
- An improved diagnostic program that enhances troubleshooting with our ULTIMATE TEST CARD.
- Over a dozen other enhancements easily make the Ultimate MPU Board the favorite industry choice.

The Ultimate Solenoid Driver Board

\$149.95 (special introductory pricing)

The Ultimate MPU Board

\$199.95

Both can be purchased direct from Alltek Systems
www.allteksystems.com

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 Pathom (New)
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 Fireball Classic
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 Nine Ball
 Nugget
 Orbitor
 Pinball
 Quicksilver
 Seawitch
 Split Second
 Star Gazer
 Stars
 Sledge
 Trident
 Viper
 Wild Boy

New Stern/Bally Games

Sexy Girl
 Big Ball Bowling
 Buck Sheep Squawker

Stern Pinball Reissues the Family Guy as Shrek



Well you can't blame Stern for doing this. The Pat Lawlor's Family Guy machine is fantastic (mini Stewie pinball is sweet!); but perhaps limited in its ultimate audience. In a smart move, Stern is experimenting with a short run (only 250) of this new Shrek machine featuring all new art, toys and sound effects using the Family Guy machine as the base.

Pinballnews.com had a nice little write up with some photos that you can check out right here:

www.pinballnews.com/news/shrek.html

The Ball Sack

I am 100% not making this up, that's the name. Pinwest introduces a product that sounds silly but has a real purpose for your valuable high end, uh, Pinballs.



As per their press release:

"The Ball Sack is a new and exciting product created by Pinwest. It is both stylish and functional while maintaining the quality you would expect. The purpose of the Ball Sack is to store and keep your Pinballs polished and unscuffed. It holds up to 6 standard sized pinballs safe and secure in individual felt lined pockets."

I've edited down the description above as it may be sort of PG-13, but if you need a Ball Sack, you can order yours here for only \$14.95. Hey they're your balls, you should protect them (sorry, it had to be said):

www.pinwest.net/

No Recession For Video Games Or Hamburgers

I guess the market is ripe for buying stock in either a video game company or your favorite burger joint in this topsy-turvy economy. I found this article noting that the only 2 industries that are making money year-after-year are videogame companies and the mentioned burger joints. From the article I read over at 24/7 Wallst.com:

"It is a very counter-cyclical industry," Burger King (BKC) Chief Executive John Chidsey told Reuters. Have a look at the menu at the fast food chain or at larger competitor McDonald's (MCD). A person can eat well on \$25 a day, or even less if they go for the "value meals". The food may not be healthy, but it is filling. Over at Nintendo, the video game company reported record earnings and revised upward its estimate for sales of its Wii for the fiscal year ending in March. The firm now expects 18.5 million units to be sold up from an earlier figure of 17.5 million."

Now to revise my stock portfolio. Read the full article here:

www.247wallst.com/2008/01/no-recession-1.html

The SNES is the Greatest Console of all Time

Well at least it is as per Don Reisinger's Blog over at CNET.com. I have to say he has made some compelling points regardless where your loyalties lie and I for one think I'm in agreement with him.

Face it, you too were amazed at the first time the famous "Mode 7" kicked in and your screen started to spin. Also, don't forget Star Fox (the first 3D polygon game for consoles) and of course Donkey Kong Country. There, that solidifies it.

As per his blog:

"In essence, the NES was the building block of American gaming in the '80s and the SNES was first console to be drastically different (and better) than its predecessor. And although it didn't quite sell nearly as many units as the NES, games like Super Mario World, Super Mario Kart, Donkey Kong Country, Street Fighter II, The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past, and even Mortal Kombat made it a must-buy for gamers all over the world."

See if you agree with his musings by checking out the full article here:

http://blogs.cnet.com/8301-13506_1-9858188-17.html

Porn Stars Talk Video Games

Ok, this caught me off guard but I thought it was so funny and completely bizarre it was worth a listing in the news. Don't worry, there's no nudity at all and nothing particularly outrageous about these interviews other than their absurd answers. It's worth a viewing if you need a laugh.

As per the website, gotfrag.com:

"Although some of the ladies were surprised to hear the question, I was able to squeeze out over 15 interviews with some of the Adult Film world's biggest stars."

Check it out if you dare, and see what they had to say right here:

<http://dpad.gotfrag.com/portal/story/41312/>

This Vest will Beat you Up

From TN Games comes this crazy new product - a vest that will literally beat you up. The vest is filled with force feedback devices that react to the on screen gaming action of your favorite PC game. It seems like a cool idea if not a bit unwieldy (and perhaps hot to wear?), but it may be interesting to try.



As per the press release:

"The 3rd Space™ Vest from TN Games takes game play beyond sight and sound, creating spatial awareness of the world your characters inhabit. Unlike traditional force feedback devices that rumble or buzz, the 3rd Space™ Vest gives you precise impact where it happens, as it happens. Get pounded with body slams, crushed with G-forces, and blasted with bullet fire."

The gaming vest sells for around \$169, and you can find a dealer through their website right here:

www.tngames.com/products.php



Unique Game Room Art

I came across Josh Goldstein's art at a local gallery in Brooklyn and immediately knew I had to own one of his works. Josh has a unique style that utilizes arcade & food signage from Coney Island in very unusual ways as he de-constructs and re-imagines them as works of art in elaborate mosaics.

His work has been sold around the globe and has been featured at galleries throughout the country.

I was lucky enough to have snagged an exclusive interview with Josh for an upcoming issue of GameRoom and am in the process of commissioning him to create for me a custom piece (that I'll cover here in GameRoom as well).

His works start from a low of \$95 to as high as you want to go (generally topping out around \$10,000), and every piece is totally unique and made by Josh.

As per his on line bio:

"Some of my larger works are hanging at the Bronx Library Center, Vitamin Water and Frank 151 headquarters, and Credit Suisse First Boston world headquarters in Switzerland, as well as various private collections. My work has been shown at Jan Larson Art, and the BAM Jewish Film Festival, and been featured in the New York Times and Daily News."

Check out some of his larger (massive) works on his site or to order one for yourself.

www.bodeganyc.com/index.php

Got a Hot News Tip?

We're always looking for exciting game room news and we need your help!

New coin-op, game room, and retro gaming product releases, industry announcements, coming events, updates on stories we're tracking—they're all fair game for inclusion in the pages of GameRoom News. If you've got something you feel is news-worthy, please send it in!

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GameRoom 2007 Survey Results

Sharing a Piece of Your Mind

I asked, and you answered. I wanted to know what you wanted more of, less of, and what you thought. You answered my questions, and then some! Here are some highlights!

Praise and Criticism

A+ Magazine!

Since you took ownership, the improvements have been well noticed — great job!

Keep up the great work! I enjoy every page, every word!

I can't wait to go to the mailbox and find the next issue.

My favorite magazine. I also receive Maximum PC to get caught up on the latest computer trends.

Magazine sucks! Sell it back to Tim Ferrante! It was a great hobbyist magazine for coin-op collectors/dealers. Now it's a bunch of crap for "gamers" — you don't even use the expression "coin-op" anymore on your cover. I won't waste my money on the few coin op tidbits that appear now.

Great Mag! I regret not subscribing years ago. Keep up the good work.

I'm a journalist for a prominent gaming web site and have been involved in the gaming industry professionally for years. Each month it's your magazine that I look forward to the most.

I'm actually not a subscriber, but since I seem to find the new issue each month and buying single issues for \$6 every time is silly, I'm probably going to take the plunge any minute now. :)

I was first worried when mag was taken over that it was going to have more video related 'stuff', but it seems only a little bit more has been added. Was going to cancel subscription, but the video related articles are not overwhelming, so I'm about to subscribe again. Thank you for your efforts Kevin in keeping the hobby alive.

I like the new format, compared to Tim Ferrante's articles, because there's more antique game articles.

I let my subscription lapse... but I'm missing it. Very enjoyable read, only mag I receive with a low depression rating.

A lot of good stuff!!

Seems to be getting better.

Better color, graphics and content... I liked the older versions too but appreciate the changes.

A really good magazine. We've been getting it about 10 years.

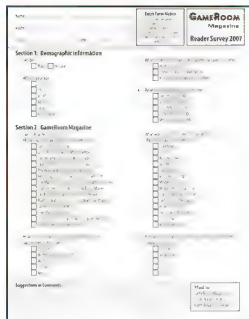
I understand that with the amount of work that has to go into a magazine like this, it really becomes a labor of love for you guys, and I appreciate it. Hope to keep reading for years to come.

**Who are you?
Well, according to
the survey, you're
male (97%), well
educated, and pretty
well off financially.**

Gamerom is a great magazine that I look forward to each month. The improvements in the past couple of years are tremendous!

Love the full color issues.

Three different owners and each one does well in their own way. The reason I started purchasing my first copy back when it all started (first issue) was the article on restoring the Seeburg C. I also like current pricing on gameroom items that is why I like the eBay part. Scoreboards is a waste of space. Who cares except the few people that have their names in it. Well, that is my two cents. Love the mag and each of the three owners had their own flair. You are keeping the hobby going and producing a fine magazine. Thanks



Column Feedback

Great job on articles.

The Wayback Machine column is the best!

Lost Arcade Classics is the best.

I have especially enjoyed the Restoring Arcade Artwork series recently.

Everything in this magazine is enlightening and informative. Funny that I should love 'I Remember Them Well'

Loved the Imber articles

Changes

More contests, more apparel in store

Oh, also inside you should reference what's on the cover — most of the time it's obvious, but it would be cool to know where the pics came from, etc.

The magazine is great! The only thing I would suggest is that more editing is performed on the written areas of the magazine. Every issue, I find many grammar, spelling, or typo errors that give an unprofessional (or apathetic) feel to the magazine. Other than that, keep up the good work!

Expand subscribers by more visits to pinball and video shows / auctions. Article on Super Auction and maybe on some other advertisers.

Thank you for adding colour to the magazine and for using quality paper. I also like the layout starting with an index and keeping us abreast of upcoming events. Good job. Consider adding articles on basic principles about game design, electronics, transformers, coils, targets, etc.

The magazine is challenged by trying to bridge the interests that cross generations. I own all EM equipment with nothing after 1967. My overall interest has waned in the magazine with the nearly exclusive ss/electronic/video/home arcade coverage. There appears to be no forum or editor interest in more vintage items.

Some articles get way too techie for us regular people.

Suggest 10 word free classified for subscribers. More classifieds means more subscribers. I think content is important. Ads that exceed 10 words; charge a small fee. If ad cost does not increase subs enough, increase mag cost slightly to offset.

1. Continue the articles of games in arcades and museums around the world.
2. Add more reviews of classic video/pinball games that are released for home game system.
3. More photos of babes with no underwear on.

Since Kevin has taken over ownership the magazine has become literally perfect. How about a column titled 'My Greatest Find,' dedicated to your reader's most prized finds? Any stories out there on 'warehouse raids' would be a fun read.

Read a C.O.C.A. magazine. This is the way gameroom used to be.

I would love to see articles on the best way to get high scores on the different pinball games. An owner's registry of all games would be nice on your website.

Would like to see a 'pimp out your pin' column. I always like the old photos of gameroom items in their heyday... would like more soda-related items. I'm a long time subscriber who appreciates your efforts in keeping this publication and hobby alive!

Column suggestion: source code analysis of games: e.g. explanation, programming tricks used, cause of bugs/easter eggs

Auction watch needs info from more auctions, like superauctions.com

Gameroom of the month should be expanded —with more pics. Also, more articles on retro video games

It would be nice if the Gameroom of the month would occasionally feature smaller collectors.

Include brief captions with pictures in articles — makes it easy to reference when browsing the magazine — otherwise it's GREAT!

More & Less

I don't have any pinball machines. I would like one, but too much pinball for me now

The King of Kong coverage went WAY overboard in my opinion.

Need more on slot machines and trade stimulators

Need more of a mix between old and new coin-op. The magazine looks great (color) but there are a lot of collectors who look for the older machines

Mag has gone WAY too video-heavy. Need better balance.

How about more on antique slots, trade stimu-

What would you like more of in GameRoom?

	A Lot More!	More	About right	Less, please	Rating Average
How-To Articles	179	97	59	3	1.337278
Repair and Restoration	177	96	61	4	1.319527
Pinball	152	88	80	18	1.106509
Arcade Video	111	93	108	26	0.8550296
Vintage Coin-Op	96	103	130	9	0.8461539
Game Room Decorating	78	119	132	9	0.7869822
Interviews	47	107	175	9	0.5680473
Collectibles	42	104	170	22	0.4911243
Classic Gaming Consoles	51	88	156	43	0.4349113
Modern Coin-Op	37	85	195	21	0.408284
Show Reports	33	77	216	12	0.387574
Jukeboxes	42	75	180	41	0.3491124
Modern Home Gaming	35	69	178	56	0.2455621
Other Game Room (Pool, Darts, etc.)	23	70	195	50	0.1952663
Slot Machines	35	59	170	74	0.1627219
Advertisements	14	52	233	39	0.1213018

lators, and jukeboxes?

Neon restoration & repairs, your color mag is great!

Could be excellent with more 'how to' and 'repair' articles.

More technical articles and real life personal stories, please

I'm a big pinhead! Needs lots of pinball stuff.

I'd like to see more about soda machines.

More gameroom variety — consoles, other unique things people consider in their own gamerooms. Home built projects. MAME projects

More technical/programming ... e.g. xgames-tation.com

There is hardly ever an article on vintage slots. The investment in a vintage slot as compared to an arcade machine indicates a far greater investment among slot collectors, but this area is all but ignored in Gameroom.

Gaming consoles blow! Get a life. This was always about coin-op—not computer games, nerds.

I understand you have a large base that was brought in before your ownership that likes the juke, vintage coverage and don't expect you to drop it. I would love as much as you could provide when it deals with classic video games. Would like to possibly see a section dealing with classic arcade consoles (Atari 2600, Intellivision, Coleco, Apple II, Commodore, etc.)

No interest at all in casino memorabilia/games. Modern home gaming is readily available in 50 other places. You have a standout niche that doesn't need to cover what is readily available elsewhere.

It is normally very well balanced magazine but I would like more interviews, background on games of all ages and generally LESS info on home video gaming.

Pachislo and Pachinko machines would be a great addition as there is a huge following of those machines.

Modern home gaming is alright, but there are many other sources for info on that.

I'm a geek, so I like the technical stuffs. Take more stuff apart!

You have little or no coverage on antique slots & trade stimulators. That's a shame since there are no monthly magazines on these topics. Collectors of these machines have a huge investment compared to a pinball or video game. Please cover these issues. If you wonder about the size of this hobby — go to the spring or fall show at Pheasant Run (Chicagoland Show)

I like to see people's game room designs and what they are collecting. My main collection is pinball, but I also have many coin-op games.

I definitely would like to see more gameroom decoration articles. I'm sure a lot of people have come up with clever homemade decorations that other people would love to try. I'd love to submit my current Monopoly shadow box project.

Would love to see more slot machine stuff possibly. Maybe more game room deco stuff/ ideas, such as neons, how to get them repaired, artwork/signs, I miss the jukebox stuff. Keep game room of the month, or maybe if entries wane, make it every two months, but I'd also like detail. Anyone can go buy a machine. Most of these folks seem to collect, put a game room together and voila. But can they fix them? Are they intimate with them? Maybe before and after pics (yes, I'm working on our game room as I write this, but I'm doing it with cash on hand... i.e. not financing anything, so my submission may be in a couple of years.) How about an article on pool tables, the good (top manufacturers) the bad (Sears brand types) the ugly (tables out of arcades and restored). Other than that, love the magazine.

Top 10 Favorite GameRoom Magazine Columns

Answer Options	Love it!	Pretty Good	Not so great	Don't like	Rating Average
GameRoom of the Month	264	66	8	0	1.733728
Coin-Op Confessions	202	117	19	0	1.485207
GameRoom News by Mitch Gerson	149	180	9	0	1.387574
Lost Arcade Classics by Kyle Snyder	153	166	17	2	1.334319
GameRoom Mailbox	118	208	12	0	1.278106
The Last Word by Kevin Steele	130	190	17	1	1.275148
The Wayback Machine by David Ellis	121	195	21	1	1.224852
Tales of the Silverball by Rob Craig	145	157	27	9	1.189349
Restoring Arcade Artwork by Michael Ford	125	174	33	6	1.121302
I Remember Them Well... by Bruce Moyer	94	212	30	2	1.08284

More articles on pins from the early 55 era and '90s Wms/Bally.

How about a monthly how-to article — like building a mame machine or basic pinball repair tips etc?

Classic video is my favorite, please never add modern gaming, there's enough out there already.

More soda collectibles.

Almost nothing regarding antique slot machines eBay auction coverage not ever close to reporting what is going on — never any articles about slot machines — feel there is a large interest and gameroom show have more on antique slots — I collect slots and pinballs

I just purchased a Stern 'Simpson's Pinball Party' and have taken a great interest in any and all pinball machines. I am now making a point play any pinball games that are available to me.

I am a video arcade restorer/collector, I would love to see more gamerooms and even an occasional how-to gameroom article.

Keep it focused on the 80s arcades — video games and pinballs, with historical backstory and modern day reincarnations where appropriate

Restoration is needed on so many machines I would like to see some more articles on that! Plus reproducing plastics, parts, etc. and maybe some interviews about the people who commercially make them (ramps, side art, etc.).

Like to see some more Jukebox content. (I just added Jukeboxes to my collection.)

I love the articles on antique coin-ops (pre-1960's), especially slot machines and arcades from 1900-1950. I loved Kevin Keinert's Mills Electricity Is Life article, for example.

More pinball... less video please!

More pinball and video!

Less Pinball, More Video

More on classic arcade and MAME gaming

What about Soda machines? Haven't seen any in years?

Great Overall. Cannot please everyone, but I like the restoration part and show coverage to keep interest in the hobby

I am actually very pleased with your balance, obviously I understand that there will be content in every magazine I don't have 100% interest in, but your magazine comes about as close as any I can think of...

This is a great magazine with enough of everything.

Subscription Cost

Initially thought it was expensive compared to more mainstream magazines, but quickly realized its worth the price.

Bit high priced for the amount of material, but I don't mind.

Definitely think I get my money's worth with my subscription. Just wish the issues were bigger, as I finish them too quick! :)

The price isn't cheap but it's worth it to me, especially if I learn something or get a neat idea for my gameroom

Not the cheapest I subscribe to, but still worth every penny

Canadians

Have yet to subscribe. Why the high price for Canadians?

Kind of expensive for Canada... however we are aware that due to rising postal rates this is unavoidable

More Canadian content.

Ads

I know it takes advertising to help pay the bills... there's just a lot of it, but understandably so.

More advertisements, meaning restoration/sales related

Less Advertisements??? DUH!!!

Asking for more ads seems counter intuitive, but if it means longer issues with more great content I'd be just fine with it, especially if the ads are for gaming expos and conventions!

I've found a couple of good vendors through ads. I only say I'd want more if it didn't sacrifice non-paid content, however.

Survey

Survey is a nice way to provide feedback, bravo!

I know by sending out this survey you're trying to make the magazine even better, Good Luck. P.S. Doing a great job!

Ummm, what?

Where do we spend our money? hmmmmmmmmmm

Also, please ask the postman to stop folding my magazine. Without folding, it'll fit in my basement just fine. Thanks!!

You had me at 'Hello'

Just plain MORE!

Not much room for improvement unless you add more pages!

The mag seems to be almost perfect but hey, if u could double the thickness of the above 'more' requests I'd be in heaven! I know — big request — lol!

There just needs to be more. I finish reading way too quickly.

The magazine needs to be 2 or 3 times larger!

I wish it came out twice a month!!! GR

Thanks to everyone who sent in their survey, and special congratulations to James Cyrus of West Virginia: You are the winner of a full set (19 volumes) of the GameRoom Magazine Digital Archives!



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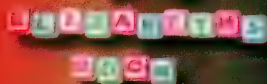
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Midwest Gaming Classic, Milwaukee, WI
www.midwestgamingclassic.com

April 11th – 13th
Rochester Gameroom Show, Rochester, NY
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Peter Hirschberg's Luna City 2.0 Arcade:

A "Very Special" GameRoom Magazine
GameRoom of the Month

To call Peter Hirschberg's game room the "ultimate home game room" is without question possibly a huge understatement. His commitment to our hobby is so total that he may be one of the most obsessed of us all, and I envy him for that. For years I've followed Peter's various projects starting with his basement arcade, that grew exponentially over the years. That in turn became (not in order)—a blog, a *Time Out Tunnel* Arcade Shrine, artwork downloads, gaming downloads, 3D artist renderings/movies of arcade machines (including work for the soon to be released to DVD—*Chasing Ghosts* arcade documentary), a web radio show and so much more.

To say Peter's "got it bad" is also perhaps an understatement, but it's a good kind of bad. For just under two years I've watched with others in fascination as Peter embarked upon his most impressive accomplishment to date on his blog: he's literally built a personal, fully working arcade within a custom 2400 square foot building on his property.

Now this isn't just any kind of building or arcade. The final product easily matches, and in many ways surpasses, many of the arcades from their 1980's peak. He's got his arcade rigged with state of the art sound, lighting, change machines, black light carpeting, and of course over 60 arcade and pins, all fully restored. Wow.

Peter was kind enough to answer a number of questions that I had for him, and I really enjoyed the wit and wisdom in his responses, and I know that you will as well. As a bonus, he's also included a really fun and insightful short essay from his wife Julie—you know she really has to love him for this monster to have ever been built.

Enjoy the interview!

Mitch Gerson: How big (approximately) was your original game collection in your home?

Peter Hirschberg: The original game room was about 800 sq ft. It was spread across two rooms actually. The new game room is 2400 sq ft. of wide-open game space.

Half of the games were packed away in my garage until we finished the new game room, since we just didn't have room left for a single machine.

What in the world inspired you to expand your collection in such a dramatic fashion?

There's no one answer, really. The size of the collection really dictated that we needed something much bigger than our basement. We were drowning in games, and getting anxious to move things out of our house since the collection had grown to such an enormous size.

But honestly, I wanted to do this since I was a kid. Around 1979 I had all my hand-held Mattel games lined up on a shelf in our basement, with Christmas lights hung over it. And a little plastic pinball machine.

That was my arcade. I think most people in the hobby collect because they like to play the games. To me the hobby is setting up a functioning arcade. It's all about the arcade experience. The games just play a (large) supporting role.

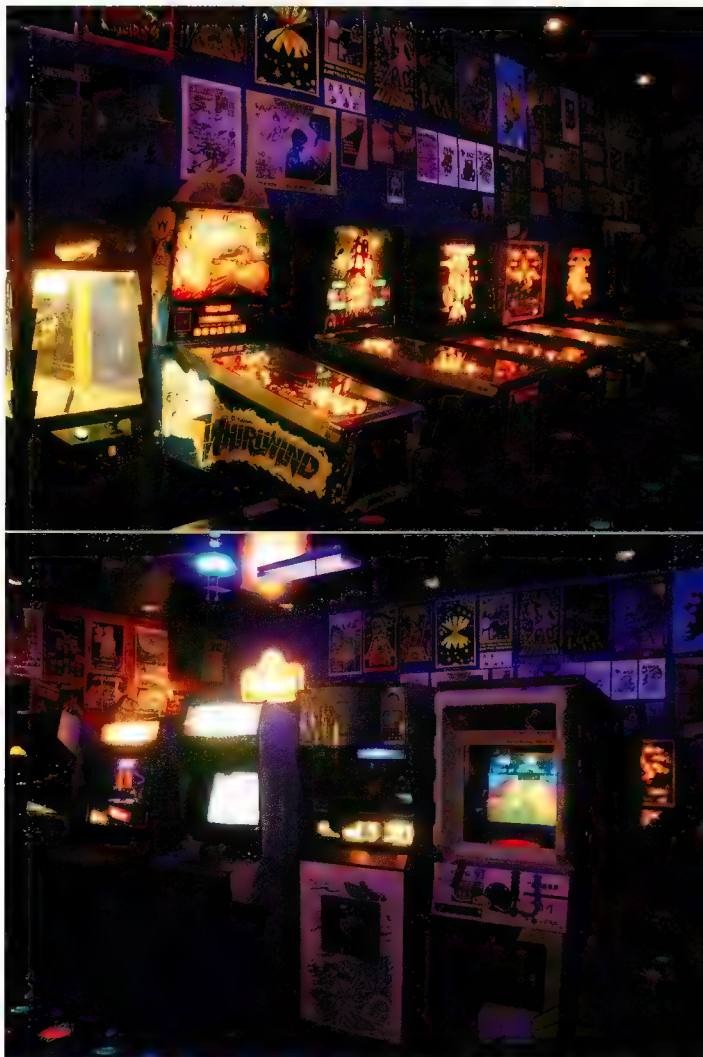
We are very fortunate to have had the resources available to do this. I think this was just a "Perfect Storm" of collecting, finances, and craziness. One of my mottoes is "*There's a time for compromise... it's called later*". I like to think big. And just remember, in 30 years it will be paid off.

What are the specs (dimension/sq feet etc) on your new home game room?

The new home game room is 2400sq ft. of wide-open space on the main floor at 60' x 40', with 12' ceilings, a bathroom, and a finished upstairs.

There's also my trademark black light carpeting, with 10 ceiling-mounted black light fixtures having 4 black light bulbs each to light up the carpet.

The building was specially wired to be able to handle the electrical load of that many games running at one time. It has two 400-amp breaker panels, with electric outlets every few feet. Between the arcade and the house, we are using an entire outdoor transformer. The electrician and the county inspector just kept laughing at me the entire time saying it was the equivalent of a com-



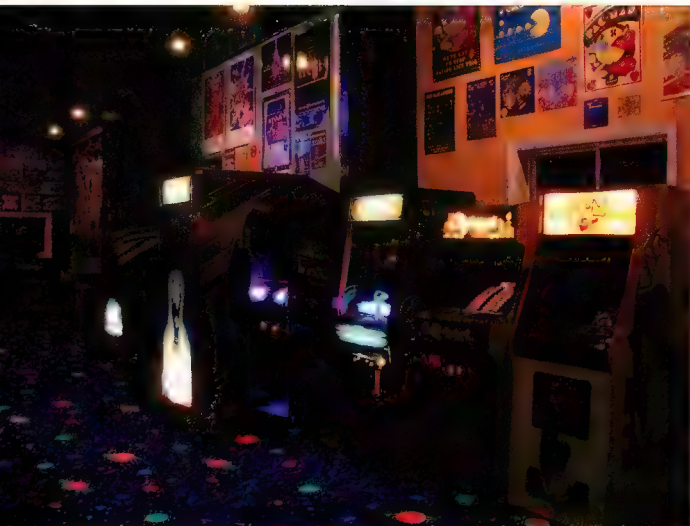
mercial building.

The building looks very much like a large garage or barn from the outside, with cedar wood siding, stonework trim, and carriage style doors. I wanted the outside building to match the house and mountain décor of the area as much as possible. It makes it easier on the eyes, and hopefully increases the property value for when we go to sell.

The 12' ceilings were very important to me for a couple reasons. One, I have a very

large collection of arcade posters and artwork that I wanted to be able to display above the machines. A higher ceiling equals more space for posters. I was also able to put spot-lighting directed at the artwork on the walls without significantly washing out the black light on the carpeting. And two, it keeps the heat from the games up away from people playing.

We found out in our first game room that an 8' ceiling combined with 40 or so arcade machines was an unpleasant combination.



In fact, cooling was a big concern for us, and we made sure we had a robust AC system installed.

We also have an electrical outlet every 12' or so that's on a different circuit. That's so we can plug in a vacuum cleaner or whatever and not have to kick on all the games. Something else we discovered in our last game room.

And of course there's a kickin' stereo system!

How much time and effort have you expended into this project so far?

I think about 2 years ago was when we started getting things together to try and figure out what we going to build. There were a few months of permits and such before anything really started being built. Actual construction of the building took almost exactly a year.

Of course I've been collecting odds and ends for the game room for years and years now, all with the intention of going in

whatever building we decided to designate the "new game room". I started collecting way back before this was even considered a "hobby". I thought I was being different. Now everybody wants games in their basement.

What does your wife (and loved ones) think of all of this?

They all love it. I get to be the crazy one and they get to come over and play games any time they want. Everybody wins.

What do your neighbors think of your new building?

I'm honestly afraid to ask. One of my neighbors did express concern about the size and location of the building when we first started. Due to his concerns about it blocking his view, we decided to relocate the building to the other side of our house. Unfortunately this meant moving our septic system, which ended up being quite involved, expensive, and time-consuming to do.

How many games do you own?

Something like 65 machines or so at the moment I think, and that includes pinball machines, videos, bill changers, and various other items.

What are your top 5 favorites?

Space War, Tailgunner II, Lunar Lander, Asteroids, and Tron.

What's next for your collection?

I definitely would like to get a few more pinball machines. There are probably about 10 pinball machines I'd like to get now that we have the room. And I'm always in the market for new vids, artwork, etc.

Whenever we have the money I'm going to get a full-sized old-school Cylon build (there's a company that builds them) and set it up to stand guard at the door. Compete with roving eye and sound effects. I wanted to get that before the game room was done but we ran out of money.

I also plan on getting some illuminated glass display cases and some glass shelving to house my collection of vintage toys, handheld games, action figures, etc.

I've got a vintage computer collection also that I am going to set all up on the upper floor whenever I feel like lugging it all up there.

One of the larger projects on the horizon is that I am building a computer controlled "wall" of vintage Simon games that will react to the music. Hopefully you remember Simon. I plan on taking about 30 or 40 original

Luna City's Game Lineup

Video Games

Asteroids
Asteroids Deluxe
Atari Football
Baby Pac-Man
Battlezone (I have 2 of these)
Berzerk
Circus
Crystal Castles
Defender
Dig Dug
Discs Of Iron
Donkey Kong
Dragon's Lair
Eliminator
Flim-Flam (cocktail Pong game)
Frogger
Galaga
Gorf
Gravitar
Robot Roust
Lunar Lander
Marble Madness
Missile Command
Moon Patrol
Night Driver
Omega Race
Pac-Man
Paperboy
Phoenix
Pong
Primal Rage
Q*bert
Qix
Race Drivin'
Reactor

Rip Off
Scramble
Sea Wolf
Space Encounters
Space Fury
Space Invaders
Space War
Space Zap
Sprint 2
Star Castle
Star Trek
Star Wars (Vectorbeam)
Starship
Stunt Cycle
Super Zaxxon
Tac/Scan
Tail Gunner II
Tank
Tempest
Iron
Wizard Of Wor
Zaxxon

Pinball Games

Centaur
Haunted House
Whirlwind
Eight Ball
Flash Gordon
Super Mario Bros
Black Hole
Fathom
Mr & Mrs Pac-Man

Other

Coin redemption machine
Americoin Junkyard
Rowe Bill changers (x2)



Simon games, gutting them, replacing the lamps with LEDs, then mounting them in a large array. There will be a computer controller that analyses the music and runs various light patterns on the Simons. Basically a giant mod-art "color organ" (if anybody remembers those from the '70s). I'm planning on putting that in the game room. I currently have 24 Simons for the project, and that's a sight to see. It's more than it sounds like. If you noticed, the color scheme of the arcade roughly matches a Simon game (Super Simon to be specific). That was intentional.

Do you wish that you had done anything differently in the construction of your arcade?

Oh sure. There were endless things that didn't turn out how I wanted or expected, unexplored ideas that we ended up not having money for. I had originally wanted the walls

to all be painted with fluorescent paint so the walls would literally glow under the black lights. That was way too expensive at about \$70 a gallon.

In the end we went way over budget anyway, with it ultimately costing us almost twice what the original estimate was. Everything cost more than we expected because it was such a huge project. Wiring, paint, carpeting, lighting. It just added up and up and up.

And honestly I wish we'd had the money to go with a larger contractor so the project wouldn't have taken so long.

How did you determine the size/scope of the building and overall project?

I had originally designed a building that was 100' x 40', complete with a large mezzanine level, a home theater, a built-in repair shop, and a separate pinball wing. Stop laughing at me!

My wife and I decided that rather than go ahead with that—something we'd obviously never *ever* want to move away from—that we should scale down a bit and just go with a building that was "big enough" for the collection plus a little growing room.

I found a set of plans online for a 6-car garage with 12' ceilings and we modified the plans to work with what we wanted. I took extreme care in designing things so that it could always still be converted to a garage. This was a big deal for us in case we ever decide to move (yes, we are thinking of it). In this way we could still put the house on the market at some point and stand a reasonable chance of selling.

Before we started construction, I modeled the building in a 3D modeling program and filled it with games to preview what it would look like inside and out, and where we could fit it on our property.

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We're still going to build the larger game room one day (hopefully).

Do you have a "holy grail" game that you have yet to collect?

I think I have all my holy grails. Machines off the top of my head that I still want—I'd love to get a Vectorbeam Warrior at some point, and maybe an Atari Quantum. And an up-right Tailgunner (I have the cockpit version). And I'd like to get another Midway Boot Hill too. I had a beautiful one years ago, but traded it for another machine. I've regretted it since. So yeah, I guess I'm not done yet.

What game resonates with you most from your youth?

I think it would be a tie between Space War and Tailgunner II.

If you had unlimited time and resources, what would you build next? Or what ARE you going to build next?

I still plan on building my ultimate game room, as mentioned previously. Whenever we settle down, of course.

If money were no object, obviously I'd do something crazy like buy the arcade building that was used in the movie *Tron* and turn it back into an arcade. I've already been tempted to buy some of the old former arcade buildings around where we live and convert them back to their former glory. Arcades that I went to as a kid. Not to make money, just to do it.

As far as you know, do you now possess the most complete and extensive personal home arcade?

I don't believe in posturing, so I won't comment on that. I will say that it is somewhat ironic that my home arcade is larger than just about every arcade I visited back in the day.

What kind of decorations do you have? What are some of your favorite "arcade authentic" touches?

I have my machines set on coins and have two bill changers set up in the game room. I have the bill changers rigged to dispense 4 quarters when I push the coin return button. That way you don't have to use your own money, but you still have to coin-up the machines. It's more authentic that way. I even have a stack of Chuck E Cheese token cups to carry the money around in. I've thought about having custom tokens made up for the game room, but honestly they didn't use tokens until about '83 or '84.

I also have a couple really big authentic



light-up signs from an old Chuck E Cheese restaurant. They are each about 6' x 4'. One says "Theater", and the other says "Cabaret".

There's a working payphone, and there's a bathroom (not really standard fare on vintage arcades unfortunately, but I'm gonna go with that anyway).

The upstairs of the game room is being used mostly for storage, but I do have an Atari 2600, an Atari Stunt Cycle console, and a Vectrex set up there if you want to "get away from the arcade."

Finally, I have a huge collection of original arcade-related artwork and posters that's hanging up in the game room.

Are you physically setting up all of the machines on your own?

Yes. I do have to get help for some of the bigger machines like the Environmental Discs of *Tron* and the pinball machines.

Do you restore/repair them yourself?

Yes. Before I did programming I did electronics repair, and I had a stint repairing and restoring games for a company that sold them for home use. And before that I repaired Atari home computers, which was good experience to prepare me for arcade games.

I do sometimes just replace a boardset if it's not worth the time to fix it. And I'll usually just replace an original power supply or raster monitor if they give me any trouble. If they work I leave them alone. Obviously I repair vector monitors since replacements aren't available. Vector games are actually my specialty.

What's your proudest restoration?

That would be *Tron*. I rescued it from a Choplifter conversion and spent about a year restoring the cabinet. It looks brand new. Actually, I take that back—it would be the Cinematronics Space War I restored years ago. I don't have it anymore. Another machine that I regret selling. Anyway, I had all the metal parts stripped and re-anodized, repro stickers made for the sides, a brand new monitor tube, everything. It was so sweet. I got good money for it, but I'd rather have the game back.

Are you done? Has this project scratched the itch for gaming?

Oh, heck no. It's not even an itch. It's more of an open wound.

What do you do professionally?

I am currently a programmer for AOL. I'm trying to break into the computer animation field though. I did some animation for the indie film "Chasing Ghosts," which was about the classic arcade scene. Hopefully more work will come along.

Anything else that you may wish to add?

I make a point of not having any "gun games" in my collection. Until I got the Primal Rage machine, I was against having any "fighting games" as well. Unfortunately my love of stop-motion animated dinosaurs exceeds my dislike for the fighting game genre. I generally stick to games made before 1984, but there are some exceptions. Finally, all the machines in the collection are dedicated machines—no



My Perspective by Julie Hirschberg

Whenever I see the *"this guy must be single—no wife / girlfriend would ever let him keep all those games"* comments, it gets me going. I was into the arcade scene when I was a teenager. I grew up in the Tidewater (VA) area, so while there were always the mall arcades, there was also *Flipper McCoy's*—the biggest devoted arcade I can remember. I didn't play that many of the "hor" games back then, but loved to watch. I always loved the more abstract games (like *Tempest* and *Qix*) or some of the obscure ones (like *Reactor*). My brother suggested to me when I was in Jr. High to use my savings to buy a game and put it on location somewhere, but I could never save up enough. And of course, no one else I knew did that, so it sounded kind of far out.

When I met Peter, he already had *Assteroids*. My thought then was *"Cool!! You really CAN own an arcade game and keep it in your home!"* Who on earth wouldn't think it was cool?!? He also had the laser discs for *Dragons Lair* and *Space Ace* (but not the games), and I gladly sat with him to watch all of the scenes play through in order. (I loved those games when I was a teenager, but didn't play them much. I was one of the crowd who watched the local "expert" play.) It was a sign of our shared interest that Peter got me *Tempest* for our first anniversary / Christmas and I think it was the best present ever.

Yes, sometimes I worried about the money. But mostly early on. I remember complaining to him about money just disappearing out of our account one summer, and he "couldn't remember" where the money was going. But when my birthday rolled around at the end of the summer it all became clear: he gave me a Moon Patrol. But money wasn't always an issue: I agreed one year to spend our tax return on Discs of Tron when a beautiful one turned up locally. (Wow! What a great find! Can't let that one get away!) I might have made him justify his expenses and ask him to work out

payment plans before I agreed to a new game, but I have rarely said "no."

When Peter started acquiring the games furiously, I wasn't really concerned about the money—he was working weekends at an arcade warehouse just so he could get the games. He wasn't really spending any of our regular money. I was more bothered by the fact that he spent every Saturday working, although I hope I didn't pester him about it too much. I probably did, though, especially when he had been at it for nearly a year.

Yes, I enjoy the games. Peter and I spent several anniversaries at Dave and Buster's (perfect date—catch a movie in the mall, then go to Dave and Buster's for dinner and an evening of playing games) until they became mostly shoot-em-up games. I don't have much appreciation for the scrolling-kicking-shooting-splatter-the-gore-everywhere games. I am not into it as much as Peter, of course, and probably wouldn't have ended up with a whole arcade in the basement if he hadn't gotten them. But I do love them and have encouraged Peter whenever he finds a game that he can't live without, and have even added my own requests to his list.

I definitely participate in the hobby. I have the number for a lot of the pinball suppliers in my Rolodex at work. I make runs to hardware stores in the area to try to find obscure or outdated chips so he can repair the boards. I've delivered coin doors and other metal parts to a paint shop to be bead-blasted and repainted, and hunted down a auto restoration company willing to repaint the Tron cabinet when Peter was fully restoring it.

However, if Peter wasn't into the games I wouldn't be able to keep them running. A big part of why we can have so many games is that Peter fixes them himself. You have to be able to handle a soldering iron and read a schematic (if you can find it) if you want to keep your games running.

I would *never* ask Peter to get rid of the games. I just wanted another building in our yard so we could have a dedicated arcade. With a snack bar with a theater-style popcorn popper. And a theater...



conversions. Except for my Marble Madness, which was originally a Road Blasters. But that's an interchangeable cartridge machine anyway, so I'm hoping that doesn't count.

As an interesting aside, when I ordered the black light carpeting they had to get the mill to do special run just for me since it was such a huge order. They didn't have enough from a single batch to guarantee a pattern match. I thought that was funny.

And I don't view what I've done as all that weird. The garage plans we started with were for a 6-car garage, listed as for "the car collector". I don't see my game room as all that different from what you'd expect a car collector or a horse enthusiast would do to support their passion. **CR**



I have to thank Peter for not only his time and contribution to this interview, but also his amazing contribution to our hobby via the various websites he hosts. Do yourself a favor and visit a few of his arcade sites below (the links will lead you to more locations & free downloads):

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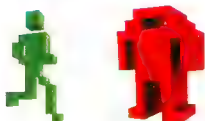
www.live365.com/stations/peterhirschberg



Peter's Arcade Collecting Website

Peter's personal website for collecting and restoring coin-op video games and pinball machines from the '70s and '80s. My game room and list of machines I own.

www.peterhirschberg.com/arcade



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Bally's Super Continental Slot Machine

Another Repair Adventure by "The Doctor" Jeffery Lawton

So, you want to own slot machines. Well, in my opinion, the Bally EM (electro-mechanical) slot machines made from 1964 through 1980 are great for home use—they are fun and exciting to play and fairly easy to maintain. Or, so I thought until I helped my friend Sal Mazzeo with his Bally *Super Continental*.

Poor Sal had burnt up two Odds Unit Step Up coils within 6 months on his machine. This is unheard of on a home use game—everybody knows that the coin circuit has protection built in to prevent this from happening. The coin switch operates and voltage is removed from the Odds Step Up circuit until the coin switch returns to normal, right? Not on Super Continental! As you can see from the schematic excerpt on the next page, the Odds Unit Step up coil is operated directly by the Odds Relay.

On every other Bally EM slot, the Odds Relay that steps the Odds Unit Step Up coil is fed via wire 74-1 (See schematics on next page) which is only "hot" when the coin switch returns to normal. Super Continental doesn't use wire 74-1 for any protection. Because Super Continental is a Replay slot machine, I can't simply change the coin wiring. I have to add a new relay to protect the Odds Unit Step Up Coil. On Sal's machine the Odds Relay is operated whenever the Coin Switch is operated. As you can see at right, as long as the Odds Relay is operated the Odds Unit Step Up Coil is operated.

"Wait a minute, Jeff" "Isn't there a safety circuit for the Odds Relay?" Yes, there is but it is only active when "replays" are being played, it is bypassed by Coin use. The only "safety" during Coin use is the release of the Coin switch.





These schematics specify how the Odds Relay is fed via wire 74-1

Sal's Super Continental is slightly different because the credit meter has been disabled and "blacked" out but all the replay circuitry is still present. The replay circuitry works perfectly and the Odd Unit Step Up coil is protected by the replay safety circuits if you are playing replays off. Unfortunately, the replay safety circuits don't protect the coil during coin play.

The best solution is to add an Odds Unit Safety Relay. To do this I converted the existing NC (Normally Closed) switch on the Odds Unit Step Up Arm End of Stroke (which is used to release the Odds Relay when the Odds Unit Step Up coil energizes during replay) to a SPDT (single pole, double throw) switch. This gives me a circuit from wire 30 (hot) to activate my Odds Unit Safety Relay. I located the Odds Unit Safety Relay right next to the Odds Unit minimizing the amount of extra wiring needed to effect the addition.

Notice how I used the normal voltage from the Odds Relay (wire 83-2) to assure the Odds Unit Safety Relay remains operated until the Coin switch actually releases the Odds Relay.

Here you can see the Odds Unit Safety Relay. Notice how I took advantage of the Odds Unit End of Stroke switch to initially activate the Odds Unit Safety Relay. Simply speaking I diverted the existing wiring from the Odds Relay switch that operates the Odds Unit Step Up coil through a normally closed switch on the Odds Unit Safety Relay. This means that the Odds Step Up coil releases as soon as the Odds Unit Safety Relay operates. I added a NO (normally open) switch on the Odds Unit Safety Relay to act as a hold circuit for the Odds Unit Safety Relay and fed that from the voltage provided via wire 83-2.

The result is the Odds Step up coil is protected and the Odds Safety relay stays operated until the coin switch releases. "Hey Jeff, so what?" What difference does it make whether or not the Odds Step Up coil or the Odds safety relay stay operated?"

Good question. You see the Odds Step Up coil is about 7 ohms resistance, which draws considerable current at 50 volts. The



The burnt up coil. The rod is frozen into the coil winding.



I located the Odds Safety relay right next to the Odds Unit, minimizing the amount of extra wiring needed to affect the addition.



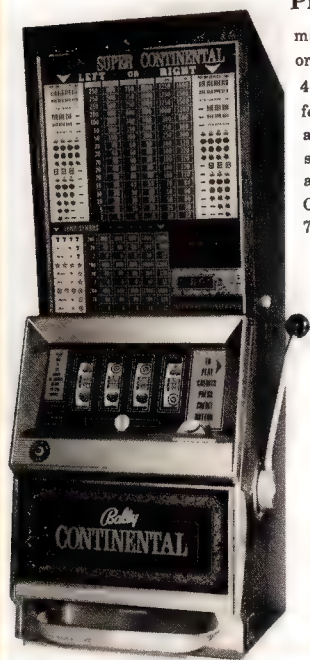
1970 Model 891 "SUPER CONTINENTAL"

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machines were available in automatic or credit metered pay. The 4-reel, 6-coin multipliers featured left-to-right and right-to-left pays. SUPER shared the same awards as the original 1969 Continental, plus adding 7s, stars and bullseyes as extra pays.

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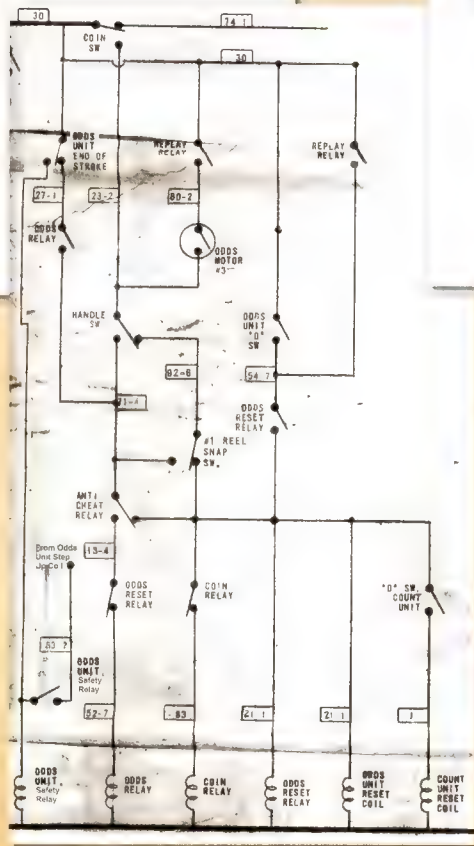
Description of the Super Continental from Bally Slot Machines, by Marshall Fey, Liberty Bell Books © 1990.



Odds Safety relay coil is about 75 ohms resistance which draws 10% of the current plus, the Odds Safety coil is designed to be operated for long periods without damage, the Odds Step Up coil is not.

Almost immediately the new relay proved it's worth during play. Twice while testing, coins hung up on the coin mechanism forcing the coin switch to stay operated. Both Sal and I agree that this is probably what caused the coils to burn up in the first place. Both times, Sal was entertaining and many people were playing all of his games. Any type of coin jam would have resulted in a burnt up coil.

Now, for those of you who wonder how a person comes up with something like this; it is exactly the same circuit logic used on every baseball pitch & bat game to protect the bat coil. Don't believe me, look it up, you'll see. **GR**



Above: Notice how I used the normal voltage to assure the Odds Unit Safety Relay remains operated until the Coin Switch actually releases the Odds Relay.

Left: Here you can see the Odds Unit Safety Relay. Notice how I took advantage of the Odds Unit End of Stroke switch to initially activate the Odds Unit Safety Relay.

Celebrating 20 Years GameRoom Magazine Flashback: 1992

Timewarp with me back to May, 1992: GameRoom has grown to 60 pages, and the content is expanding to include articles on EM pinballs, such as this article by Bill Cowles on Gottlieb's classic *Buckaroo*.

The focus of the magazine is still clearly on collectibles: other articles in the May issue include show reports on a "Big Top" auction (circus and carousel memorabilia) in Tampa, Florida, and a "Cow-boy" auction (wild west memorabilia) in Scottsdale, Arizona. There's also a book review of Allan Petretti's 8th edition of the *Coca-Cola Collectibles Price Guide*.

Stay tuned: each month this year I'll present another selection from a different issue, as we celebrate the countdown to 20 continuous years of celebrating the home game room!

Kevin Steele, Publisher and Editor
GameRoom Magazine



by Bill Cowles

The lion's over plain, a scene from the pinball collector and reviewer Bill Cowles of New York, CA. Buckaroo is a classic pinball machine from Gottlieb, and he's a hard enough to find as a knowledge of his collection.

Buckaroo is a very popular single player pinball machine. It was introduced in 1965 by Gottlieb and Co., a popular pinball game manufacturer. It's known for its solid build, simple play, and the shape of the machine.

A single player pinball machine, it was introduced in 1965 by Gottlieb and Co. It's a classic pinball machine, and it's known for its solid build, simple play, and the shape of the machine.

One of the first things you'll notice when you look at the Buckaroo is the simple design. It's a classic pinball machine, and it's known for its solid build, simple play, and the shape of the machine.

combination of the 21st century. The pinball machine is a classic, and it's known for its solid build, simple play, and the shape of the machine.

Most of the pinball machines are made of metal, and they're known for their solid build, simple play, and the shape of the machine.

The pinball machine is a classic, and it's known for its solid build, simple play, and the shape of the machine.

The pinball machine is a classic, and it's known for its solid build, simple play, and the shape of the machine.



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The WAYBACK Machine



by David Ellis

Laserdisc Games in the Palm of Your Hand

In a number of past installments of *The Wayback Machine*, I have reminisced that avid coin-op fans of the 80s were always looking for a way to bring the arcade experience home. The first mega-hit home video game console, the Atari 2600, was catapulted to its success largely because somebody at Atari was savvy enough to lock in the licenses to most of the popular coin-op video games of the time.

We, the home video game consumers, were (usually) pretty tolerant of the fact that the home versions didn't quite look like the arcade versions. We knew that technology and cost were limitations, and that the game companies of the time did their best with what they had. They even took on extremely involved games—*Defender*, for example—and somehow squeezed five buttons and a joystick's worth of controls into a joystick with a single fire button. Not to mention that they took a graphically complex game (by 80s standards) and created what was at least a semi-recognizable facsimile with only a fraction of the computing horsepower.

Although we always hoped that our favorite arcade games would eventually make it to our home consoles, we were also realistic about what could and couldn't be done. The best example at the time was *Dragon's Lair*. One look at that game and even the most hopeful among us knew that there was probably no way it would ever make it home—not on any of the consoles most of us owned at the time.

Not that it wasn't attempted. Starting in 1984, there were a number of attempts to recreate the arcade hit—minus the laserdisc animation, of course. None of these was particularly successful. In fact, it wasn't until the Commodore Amiga came along that home computers with sufficient horsepower to handle the original animation existed.



And even the Amiga version had to leave out some of the rooms from the original game due to data storage limitations.

Nowadays, console, PC, and even DVD versions of the game exist. But who would have thought that it would ever be possible to play *Dragon's Lair* in all its original glory

"The PC version released about five years ago used 1.6 GB of data for the video footage alone... the largest cartridge size [for the DS] is 128 megabytes. We spent the better part of two months doing nothing but experimenting with the original video and audio"



in the palm of your hand?

Hans Olsen and his team at United Coders have been around since 1987, and they recently began developing video games for a number of platforms, including the Nintendo DS handheld system. Like all of the other video game fans who drooled over the

animated wonder that was *Dragon's Lair* in 1983, Hans was always on the lookout for a home version that could do justice to the arcade original.

"Since 1983 I have been a fan of the game, and always invested in new versions of the game as they became available on home computers and consoles," he said. "I still remember saving up money for months to buy the C64 cassette version, which in reality had nothing in common with the original *Dragon's Lair* game apart from its name."

Hans describes finding the perfect home version of *Dragon's Lair* as one of his childhood dreams—and eventually that dream morphed into a desire to become involved in the development of a *Dragon's Lair* game. He turned his sights on the powerful handheld platforms that are currently available.

"Being a licensed and certified Nintendo developer it was a surprise to me that nobody had begun developing a version of the game for Nintendo DS," he said. "At this time there are about 50+ different versions available on a variety of platforms and consoles, and there was even a version for the original Game Boy, and one for Game Boy Color, yet no release was ever arcade accurate, and in most cases lacked the look and feel of the original arcade."

United Coders contacted *Dragon's Lair* LLC and Digital Leisure, the co-owners of the *Dragon's Lair* intellectual property, about a year ago with a proposal to bring the game to the Nintendo DS.

For those who are unfamiliar with the DS, the Nintendo handheld is currently the best selling game console on the market. The device has two three-inch color LCD screens, each of which has a resolution of 256 x 192 pixels. One of these is a touchscreen where the player can interact with the game via an included stylus, and a built-in microphone that allows the player to use voice commands in games that are designed to respond to them. The DS has 4 MB of RAM, and two ARM processors—a main CPU that runs at 67 MHz and a 33 Mhz co-processor.

Hans says that developing any game for the DS, where the memory and cartridge space are sparse (at least by today's video game console standards) is challenging, but is definitely something his team is well suited for.

"I have a background writing games on the C64, the Amstrad CPC and the Amiga and Atari ST, and the development process is not that different! Mind you, if you have only done games on PC, Xbox or PlayStation, there is a lot to learn. In my opinion, if you

are old enough to have done games on the old 8- and 16-bit computers, you have a head start over developers who have never done work on those systems."

The biggest challenge in the case of *Dragon's Lair* was the video footage. The DS version contains *all* of the footage that was originally on the arcade laserdisc—which was no small task considering the storage limitations of DS cartridges!

"A laserdisc could store [around] 30-50 gigabytes if you stored the files digitally and uncompressed," he said. "The PC version released about five years ago used 1.6 GB of data for the video footage alone. On the Nintendo DS... the largest cartridge size currently available from Nintendo, the maximum amount of space is 128 megabytes on the cartridge. We spent the better part of two months doing nothing but experiment-



ing with the original video and audio—to see how much we could compress, and how, to fit every single video frame onto a small Nintendo cartridge. In fact, one third of the development time (actually more) was spent entirely on converting and optimizing video to ensure we had the best possible visuals without loss of quality."

The quality of the images seen in the pre-release screen shots seems to indicate that this was time well spent. The animation looks very crisp and clean in spite of the amount of data compression used.

After the video problems were solved, the team moved onto the game itself. In this area, Hans and his team decided not only to recreate the arcade game, but also to create what they call the Director's Cut mode. The goal Arcade mode was to recreate the arcade experience as accurately as possible. This mode, therefore, doesn't take advantage of any of the console's unique input features.

"The Arcade mode is exactly what its name implies; a genuine arcade accurate version of the 1983 arcade game with LEDs for scores, featuring the same semi-randomness of the

scenes being played," Hans said. "In Arcade mode... you play the game using the D-Pad and the A button as your sword."

Throughout the development process, Hans and his team was in close contact with the original creators of *Dragon's Lair*, who provided invaluable support throughout the six-month development process. In addition, to ensure that the Arcade mode accurately recreated the coin-op experience, United Coders brought together a team of expert advisors and testers to assess the game.

"We wanted to ensure that we created the best ever arcade accurate version of the game," said Hans. "We spent a lot of time seeking out the world's most experienced *Dragon's Lair* experts. These are the people who can play the game from start to finish, without dying, blindfolded, with their backs turned to the arcade! The Advisory Panel is a hardcore bunch of specialists whose exclusive mission in our project is to ensure we get everything right, down to the smallest detail."

The new Director's Cut mode moves beyond the original arcade experience in a number of ways. For starters, the player gets five lives instead of three. In addition, the updated version of the game takes advantage of the unique control inputs of the DS.

"The player can use the D-Pad to navigate Dirk, or even use the stylus and tap on the bottom screen to invoke an action," Hans explained. "In addition to stylus support we have support for the Rumble Pak which rumbles (shakes) the Nintendo DS when the player is supposed to make a move. Most new players are frustrated because they are not sure when to make a move, and in which direction to move. The support of the Rumble Pak does not give the player the solution, but it does rumble the DS at the time when a move is expected! [The Director's Cut also features] voice recognition, meaning you can... simply sit back, relax, and talk to the Nintendo DS to control Dirk throughout the adventure!"

One of the most interesting additions from a classic game enthusiast's perspective is the inclusion of game footage that wasn't found in the arcade game—at least not in the US release.

"Director's Cut mode features [a] scene... where Dirk the Daring has to cross a drawbridge and avoid getting killed by tentacles. This video footage existed in 1983 but was never used in the North American version, only in the European version of the arcade. In Director's Cut mode, this is always the



very first scene you play, as it gives a nice introduction to the player beginning the adventure. The laserdisc from 1983 had a lot of video footage that was never made available to the player in 1983. All this extra footage is now available in Director's Cut mode."

Director's Cut mode also changes the flow of the game, making it more linear.

"In 1983, the game played somewhat 'semi-random,' by this I mean some scenes, in particular a falling platform, was played no less than four times during a single game play session!" Hans said. "To new players who have never played *Dragon's Lair* before, it's highly confusing that you need to play the same sequence over and over again. Director's Cut mode is based on a more linear adventure approach where the scenes are... in a specific sequence carefully conceived and invented by our Technical Producer, Dave Hallock, who is, without doubt, the worlds leading expert on *Dragon's Lair*. Dave Hallock is also one of the few people who has ever reversed engineered the original ROMs,

and improved flaws in the original game."

Director's Cut mode has a number of other features that make the game less arcade-ish and more like a modern adventure game. The goal in this mode is not to achieve the highest score—your goal is to rescue the princess. To that end, there is no score, and the game allows players to track progress on a scrolling map of the castle.

Now that United Coders has just about finished with *Dragon's Lair*, the question that probably comes to the minds of many classic game fans is whether the team plans to take on any other laserdisc games. Hans says that he and the team are definitely interested in doing so—and they have the technology in place to tackle the task.

"Throughout the process of developing *Dragon's Lair* for Nintendo DS we have developed a genuine laserdisc game engine; this engine allows us to adapt any laserdisc game to our code with minimal effort," he said. "Obvious games for us to work on would be *Dragon's Lair 2* and... *Space Ace*, both of

which are very similar to *Dragon's Lair* from a technology point of view. I would be very surprised if United Coders are not involved in other laserdisc based games in the next year or so."

Even though there are a myriad of versions of *Dragon's Lair* available today, the DS version is definitely shaping up to be one of the most faithful recreations ever produced. Sure—we all know that nothing compares to standing in front of an actual arcade cabinet and playing the real thing, but if you're looking for a *Dragon's Lair* fix without the laserdisc game maintenance headaches and the high cost, this might be just the ticket.

Plus, it fits in the palm of your hand and you can take it with you wherever you go. The game that arcade enthusiasts never thought would make it home in any form resembling the original can now play *Dragon's Lair* on an airplane. Ain't modern technology grand?

Lead on, adventurer. Your (handheld) quest awaits! **GR**

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"A Picture is Worth..." Keith Elwin's Pinball Photography

A picture is often worth a thousand words, or at times, no words come quickly as you react to what you see. Maybe a smile, or a feeling of temporary amazement envelopes you. Sometimes there's a lot to discuss, other times you just have to absorb it for a while.

Art appreciation gels perfectly with pinball photography in my opinion. I am one that can just look over machines and get a lot of satisfaction. After all, isn't a pinball machine a small scale world underneath the glass? And with mid-80's machines and newer, there's physically more to absorb in this silverball wonderland.

But there is this matter of perspective that is almost always overlooked as one casually browses over a machine. There are fantastic viewpoints and unique lighting that are found while placing a camera in unique locations, along with distinct photographic settings that can only be achieved by using high quality cameras merged with the skill and knowledge of modern photography. The result, when done correctly, is nothing short of stunning.

If you're a regular reader of *Tales of the Silverball*, you surely remember last year's article about Kevin Tiehl. Kevin's shots were typically focused on older EM machines. Here we have another perspective from Keith Elwin. Wait, did I say Keith Elwin? Indeed. This is the Keith Elwin that hovers in the #1 spot on the WPPR rankings on a regular basis. If you've seen him play, you know that he's a true pinball wizard.

What most people don't know is that Keith is also a fantastic photographer. And his understanding of pinball from the player and restorer perspective provides a unique character to his photographs. What follows is the result of a recent discussion between



the two of us. Enjoy the photographs as you read along.

Keith works for an operator, specifically in pinball restoration. With photography as a hobby since high school, he has the experience and skill to continue shooting photos for web site design, eBay listings, and other graphic design purposes. Selecting pinball as a subject to shoot is undoubtedly a natural choice. As Keith puts it, "I think they (pinball machines) are fascinating! What could be better than to combine my two favorite hobbies! I also have great access to many machines at my work (www.areaamusements.com) so as the machines get shipped, I try to do a photo shoot before they get put back on location."

com) so as the machines get shipped, I try to do a photo shoot before they get put back on location."

What kind of pinball machines do you like to shoot? Any specific genre? Manufacturer? Theme?

"Kevin Tiehl has some really nice pictures that he sells at California Extreme but they are mostly 60's machines. I have been trying to capture the DMD generation for the people who grew up with those games instead. Although I do have some older machines I have done, I try to concentrate on the newer stuff."



As we both know, the ball is crazy on the playfield. What do you hope to capture in a single instant with these pictures?

"I hope to capture something that normally happens so fast you would never know it is happening :) I violate a lot of photography composition rules when shooting but sometimes it must be done to get just the right reflection or angle to capture everything in the frame I am hoping for."

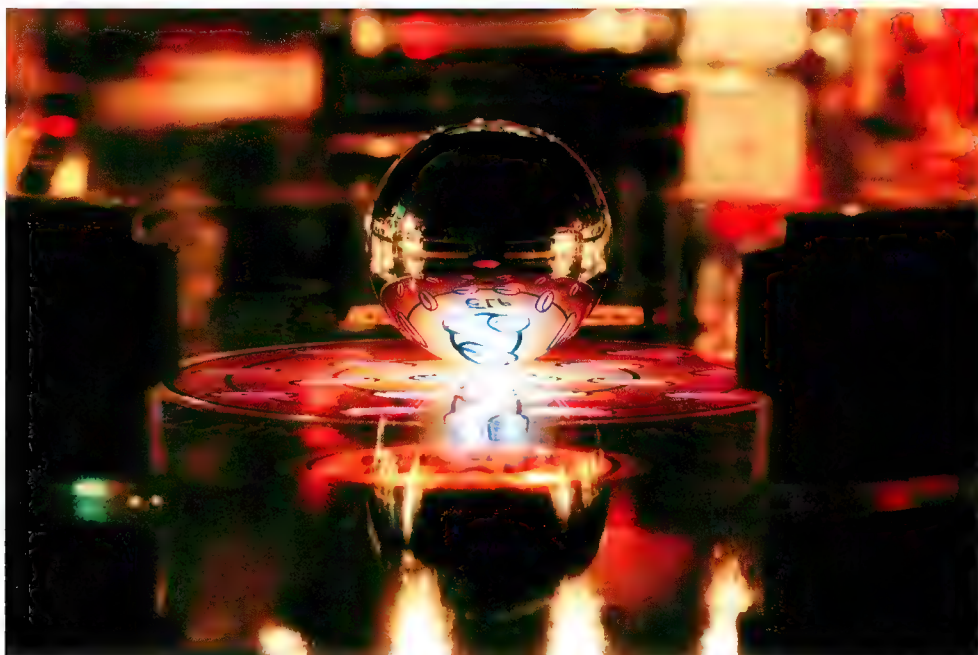
How different is it to shoot modern DMD machines compared to older 'flat' machines?

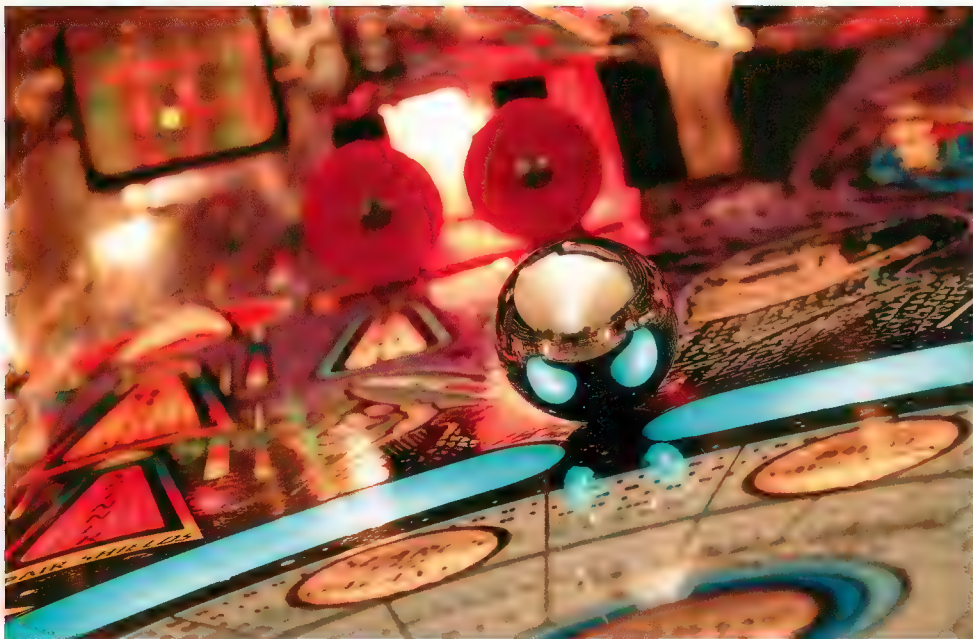
"I believe it is much harder to shoot DMD games as far as lighting goes due to hotspots from GI lights, shiny clearcoated playfields, and having the machine sunk deeper into the playfield. But the upside is of course the ramps and other depth of field objects. Older machines have much less GI, diffused playfields from all the wear and tear, and are generally much more colorful."

Do you shoot with a digital camera or film?

"I use a digital SLR camera with 4 lenses (macro, wide, fisheye, zoom)"







Do you have to set up additional lighting to get the shot to look right?

"Yes. This is 90% of the pain of shooting the picture. Especially with the DMD machines which sit deep in the cabinet and have many general illumination lights. Often times I will have to remove some of the light bulbs because they are creating glare. Another problem is background. When shooting close-ups of the ball you are almost getting a 180 degree reflection. So if you have your Daisy Duke poster hanging on the wall anywhere near where you are shooting it will surely show up on the ball as well as any ceiling lights."

How much work do you have ahead with the image after you shoot it? In other words, what level of post photography editing is involved?

"If you shoot just right you can do as little as 5 minutes of post production. I have gotten to the point now where I know where to position everything so I can avoid having to Photoshop out a background image or light glare or reflection of the camera. I still use Photoshop to touch up specks of dust or tweak some colors. You would be amazed at how the tiniest speck of dust or hair will show up on the pictures."



What's your favorite shot?

"My favorite is Dracula because the colors just came together so well in that picture."

Anyone can order a print of the photos featured in this article or one of the many

others showcased on the DaveyCat Design website. The current photo sizes are 8.5" x 11" 13"x19" without matting. Keith also supplies mattes if you need them. Visit his site at www.pinballreviews.com/pixindex.htm to view, get pricing, and order. **GR**

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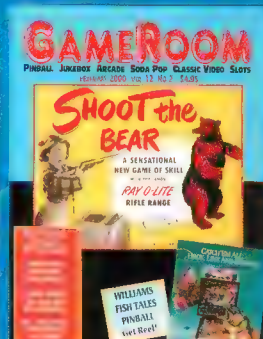
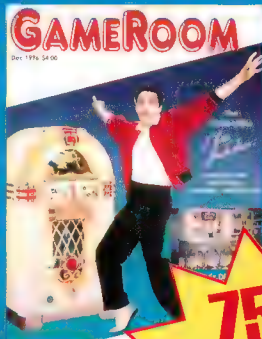
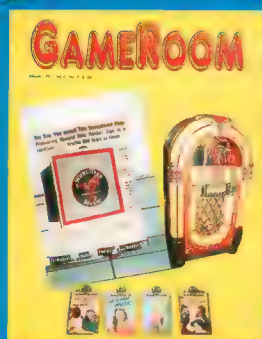
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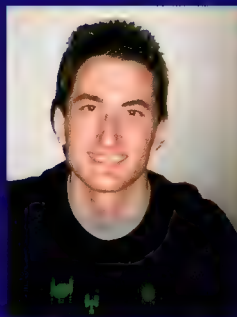
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The Many Incarnations of...

by Jonathan Imberi



The Many Incarnations of 1942

This article is part of a series I call “The Many Incarnations of...”, a column which will chronicle the different game titles that have been released over the years featuring a central character or theme. Pac-Man is here to provide “color commentary,” and Professor Pac-Man is on hand with interesting tidbits of trivia about each game!

1984

1942



Story Behind The Game: Jonathan Striker is an ace fighter pilot currently serving on a carrier in the South Pacific Ocean. The aircraft carrier he is serving on is on its way to Japan by way of the Pacific Islands. Everything seems quiet. Suddenly, a strange Tsunami wave crashes upon the carrier, rendering all the planes useless, except his. Striker thinks it's the ancient art of Tsunami Summoning that he heard about from his father. He has been wanting to discover the art and use it for himself. This may be the

chance he's been waiting for. But, right now Striker's first and foremost duty is to take down the entire Japanese Air Force. Single-handedly.

Hey Prof, what do you know about the planes featured in each of these games? I know one thing—they picked the right name for their Super Ace pilot. I have always thought the name Jonathan was underused, yet distinguished-sounding. Wocka! Wocka!

From the desk of Professor Pac-Man: Well Pac-Man, the plane featured in 1942 is the Lockheed P-38 Lightning (or at least it's based on it). The actual Lightning was a complete break-away from conventional airframe design, power, and armament. Not only did it have twice the power and almost twice the size of its predecessors, it was also equipped with no less than four .50 cal. machine guns plus a 20 mm cannon. The P-38 had enough firepower to sink a ship—and sometimes did. Concentrated in the central fuselage pod, the guns fired parallel which eliminated a need for a propeller synchronizer.



1987

1943 – The Battle of Midway

Story Behind The Game: Jonathan Striker was heralded as a hero last year. His courage and unmatched skills in the air gave the Allies a tremendous victory. After the battle, Jonathan searched for someone to teach him the ancient art of Tsunami Summoning. He found Master Kasanagi and spent two



months with the Master. Striker spent his free hours on the carrier perfecting the art so he could use it in the midst of battle. On one sunny afternoon while he was practicing, Striker's carrier was attacked by a squadron of Zeros. All the planes were destroyed except Striker's and the carrier was severely damaged in the attack. Man, what luck, he thought. He took on the entire Japanese Air Force last year and has to do the same thing this year.

E Man, that P-38 must have been one pac of a plane to be the only survivor of TWO separate attacks! Wocka! Wocka!

From the desk of Professor Pac-Man: This game was released in Japan as "1943 Kai – Midway Kaisen" which translates to "1943 Modified – Midway Naval Battle". The title featured increased difficulty and new graphics.

1990

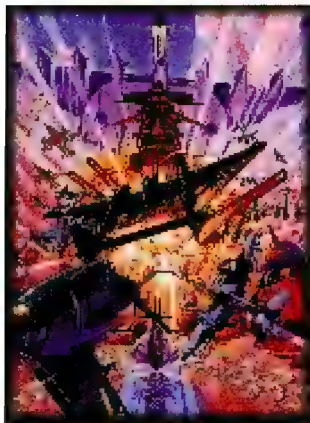
1941 – Counter Attack

Story Behind The Game: Before Jonathan Striker became a hero fighting Japanese Zeros, he took part in a mission to restore the integrity of history. A European from far in the future traveled back in time to 1941 to try and alter the balance of power early on in the war. He brought back laser technology with him and supplied it to the Axis forces of his ancestry. Jonathan Striker, a fresh pilot with an exemplary academy record, was ordered to find the men from the future and eliminate them. No one outside a small circle of military leaders was to know about this mission. Knowledge of the advanced weaponry to the world could have spread even greater fear and chaos of the citizens of the warring nations. Thanks to their network

of spies, the U.S. obtained the laser technology themselves, so Striker was able to bring a fair fight. Striker needed to defeat this Axis faction before they altered history. Since many buildings were destroyed in Striker's attack, the mission was recorded as a series of successful bombing runs throughout a few Axis occupied cities.

E Well... It's a good thing someone cleared that up. I was beginning to think they forgot what year came after 1943. Wocka! Wocka!

From the desk of Professor Pac-Man: This game featured both the Lockheed P-38 Lightning and the de Havilland Mosquito B Mark IV. The Mosquito was conceived as a bomber, but became one of the war's most potent fighters. It excelled in a wide variety of roles. Its duties included low-level and high-attack day and night bomber, long-range photo-reconnaissance, mine layer,



pathfinder, high-speed military transport, long-range day and night fighter, and fighter-bomber.

1995

19XX – The War Against Destiny

Story Behind The Game: In 1941, Jonathan Striker defeated a force with technologically advanced weapons from the future. He thought he killed the time traveler responsible, but he was wrong. The time traveler transported back to the future just before his Gotha jet was destroyed. Back in the



Above: 1944 – The Loop Master
Left: 19XX – The War Against Destiny

future this madman made new plans to alter the destiny of his people. Jonathan Striker thought he'd be able to take a little time off to visit his parents back in the States after his impressive victory in the Battle of Midway. He was wrong again. That time bandit came back and brought even more powerful technology with him this time. He has influenced commanders of the European Axis powers to join him in his war against the history books. He wants to end the war early by dropping nukes on the Allied powers. This is a top secret mission that only ace fighter pilot Jonathan Striker can handle. The Allied forces that obtained the technology last time have been secretly studied it and have developed slightly more powerful weapons for Striker to use in his newest battle. Since he has neglected practicing his Tsunami Summoning, the new weapons will prove to be a great help. This will be Striker's toughest battle yet, as the enemy forces are spread all throughout Europe. He must destroy their factories and prevent the launch of the nukes that could change the world's destiny. While en route to the drop point Striker's transport plane is attacked. He barely escapes before the transport becomes a fiery ball speeding towards the sea...

Okay, now I am convinced that someone is just a little daft at Capcom. I mean 19XX, who do you think you're fooling? It's obvious you just can't count. It's not that hard – really – it should be 1944. Wocka! Wocka!

From the desk of Professor Pac-Man:
In addition to the P-38 and Mosquito this

game featured the Kyūshū J7W1 Shinden. The only "tail-first" piston-driven aircraft ever slated for mass-production, the radical canard-style Shinden J7W1 "Magnificent Lightning" was conceived in 1943 and first test-flown in August 1945. The plane had the potential to be a formidable interceptor, but only three prototypes were built before the war came to its abrupt conclusion.

2000

1944 – The Loop Master

Story Behind The Game: With his incredible flying skills, ace pilot Jonathan Striker had become known to as the Loop Master. He has perfected the loop attack, but in expense of another skill he used to hone, the Tsunami Summon. Perhaps someday he will get to practice it again, but it will have to wait. Striker has his toughest mission ahead of him. Soldiers on the Allied and Axis sides of the war have been displeased with their respective countries' results during the war. Through coded transmissions, traitors on both sides of the war have formed an alliance and now fight their former Axis and Allied comrades. One of the Axis commanders is a survivor from Striker's XX secret mission. He has brought with him the laser technology that his descendant originally brought from the future. Lasers have been added to many of the larger planes and vehicles. Once again Jonathan Striker must fight against technology from the future. Fortunately, a spy in this deadly alliance has given Striker

and his new wingman lasers of their own. This new force has unleashed surprise attacks on each of their countries, hoping to turn the tide of war in their direction. Because of this treachery, Striker has joined forces with an ace Japanese Zero pilot named Ryu Tsunaka. Striker and Tsunaka must set aside their feelings for their former countrymen and each other. The two must find the mobile base of this new threat and end this conflict before the war gets any worse.

 **Hey they got it right this time!** Or... maybe that time traveler just traveled ahead in time, read this column and then traveled back in time to become a hero and the future president of Capcom. Wocka! Wocka!

From the desk of Professor Pac-Man: In this game the P-38 returns and brings with it the Mitsubishi A6M2 Zero Model 21. A triumph of aerodynamic engineering and military science, the Japanese Zero Model 21 served in the skies across East Asia during early stages of World War II, contributing immensely to the Japanese war effort. It remains today an enduring symbol of that fierce and globe-spanning conflict.

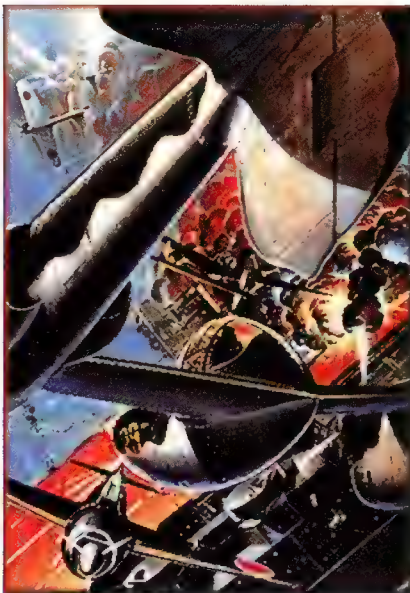
Beyond the Arcades

1995 – Strikers 1945
1997 – Strikers 1945 II
1999 – Strikers 1945 Plus
1999 – Strikers 1945 III

 **Hey, those Axis forces are a real pain in the chomp – A bit much for one ace alone. I know I'm ready to give of Jonathan a hand, or better yet, a mouth! Wocka! Wocka!**

* This article is only a listing of known unique game titles. It does not cover clones of released titles, nor will it list the various platforms the titles have appeared on. It is not meant to be an all-inclusive reference listing, and should be viewed only as the recreational offering it was intended to be. Game descriptions, game titles and registered trademarks mentioned herein are properties of their respective owners.

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Coin-Op Confessions

Subject Name:
Aaron Ulrich
Occupation:
Security
1st Game Owned:
SlikStik MAME Cab

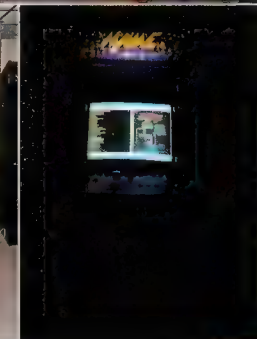
*Hi, I'm Aaron Ulrich,
and I am a Coin-Op
Addict.*

My coin-op obsession began between the ages of 8 & 10. I did a lot of arcading because I had nothing else to do at the bowling alley while my mother bowled on her company bowling league. My mother would clean out her purse and hand me a bunch of quarters and I would be off and running to play games like Jungle Hunt, Altered Beast, Pac Man, Ms. Pac Man, Tron, Donkey Kong, Centipede, etc.

Years later I got into electronics of all kinds, ham radio, and the last six years computers have taken over my life. In 2003 I was heavy into game console emulators when my friend who has a game room, bought a M.A.M.E. machine from a local company. That's when the love of arcade games bit me again, this time huge. His arcade had all of the games I played at the bowling alley plus many more. Since I already understood computers and emulation, I studied the M.A.M.E. emulator then bought my first disc set "0.89" released November of 2004. x-rated games and Mahjong games I cleaned up using Content Manager that I discovered on Kevin Steele's site RetroBlast.com which I always used for research.

After tweaking my version of M.A.M.E. and playing it a lot on my personal computer and on my friend's cabinet arcade, I was finally ready to build a much nicer cabinet system for my friend than the one he purchased from the local arcade shop.

Thanks to my friend for stumbling on M.A.M.E. and thanks to Kevin Steele for all of the resources he made available. My story is short and sweet, I play M.A.M.E. nearly every day and I can truly say the "game is never over". **GR**



I Remember Them Well...

by Bruce Moyer



Upon the conclusion of my last column, we were enjoying my Gottlieb 'Flying Circus'. However, the newspaper/magazine store where I played it, as well as the Williams 'Magic Clock' which I no longer owned, remained my favorite away from home location. It was here, once again, where I would fall in love with the next game I would buy. Unlike in the past, I would not sell my only game to raise funds for my next game. Instead, we would now become a 2 game household. What was this game about to be added to our little recreation corner? It was a Gottlieb 2-player 'Preview'!

This Wayne Neyens/Roy Parker gem looked super next to my 'Flying Circus'. Here were two real class games (especially for that era) from 2 of Gottlieb's all time great creators. At this point in time, I, and many others, would not yet realize how significant Mr. Neyens and Mr. Parker would be in the industry, although they had long since made a real splash. I have often times referred to them as the 'Dynamic Duo'. Although the industry would acquire some great designers and artists in the future, this duo, in my estimation, has never been topped.

Now, let's get to 'Preview.' I recall this game being set on 3-ball play, as all games at this location were. The replays would score at 800 - 1000 - 1100 - 1200 points. This game proved to be much too easy for some of us, especially me. It was a great action game with a lot of big scoring features. At the top of the field were six rollovers of which you had to pass through one of them off of the plunger shot. Two of these rollovers would always be lit for 100 points instead of 10 points. There were two rollovers about a third of the way up the field (one on each side) and two outlanes by the flippers. These would alternate for 100 points when lit. How sweet to go up the back way and down again on one of these side or top rollovers for 200 points. Then you had three pop bumpers of which two of them alternated for 10 points when lit. The other pop bumper for 1 point may not have seemed very lucrative but it would often times send the ball up and down

GOTTLIEB 2-PLAYER
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a rollover or change the alternating bumpers so the one you hit would be lit. Also, you had the cyclonic kickers which alternated for 10 points when lit. The five numbered buttons, when worth only 1 point, would help change the cyclonic kickers to help get 10 points when you hit one of them.

If all this wasn't enough, the feature was the five numbered targets, all of which could be hit from the flippers. As these were hit, the corresponding numbered buttons would light for 10 points. Incidentally, the numbered targets all scored 10 points. The targets / buttons feature would carry over until the feature was completed. At the end of the ball, the player completing the feature would receive a bonus 100 points as the ball left the field. Then, it would start all over again. This meant that it was possible to have three, maybe four buttons lit for some time.

Although the proprietor didn't mind that we virtually annihilated this game, the operator noticed the big drop in coinage and, after about three weeks, came to remove it. That, of course, is when I dug into my pocket to buy it. I remember being about \$30.00

short and when I mentioned that I may have to sell the 'Flying Circus', my dad reminded me about how burned up (that's putting it nicely) he was because I sold 'Magic Clock' and said I wasn't to sell the 'Flying Circus'. He pitched in the difference and we became a 2 game household. This would be the first time I would have a game set on 3-ball play because I knew that it would be too easy on 5-ball play, even with the highest possible replay sequence. I set the replay levels at 1200 - 1400 - 1500 - 1600. The not so good players had a rough time with 1200 points but, for me and some of the guys, it was just right. We won enough to make it fun but, the game always won in the end. And, that's the way it should be. It wouldn't be long that I needed some rubber rings and bulbs for the 'Flying Circus' and it was while at the operator's shop that I would see a Williams 2-player 'Metro'. I used to play this at a local luncheonette and "I Remembered It Well". My 'Preview' was about to depart and I would now own a game with a disappearing bumper. More about 'Metro' in the next column. **GR**

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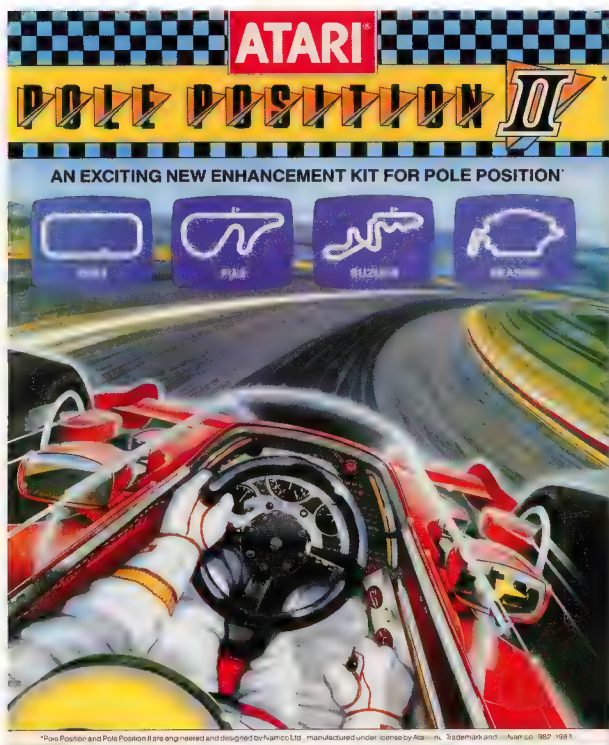
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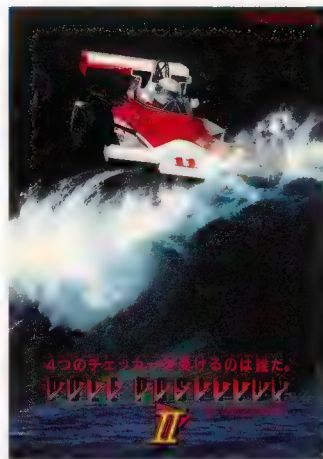
by Dan Hower



Pole Position II (1983)



United States



Japan



Europe

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GameRoom Reviews

Graphic Violence Art

Not as Nasty as it Sounds...

by Mr. Dandy
Prices: \$7.99 to \$20.00
www.MrDandy.com

Looking for some cool 80's-style retro "bling?" Check out these pendants and other artwork from Mr. Dandy. The "Graphic Violence" line features arcade video game inspired artwork. From the bit-mapped styled pendants to the invader-esque wall hangings, there's something here for every fan of vintage gaming—heck, check out that funky Kong head, which is actually a "joystick topper" for an Atari 2600 joystick!

This is a unique line of artwork, with a special style all its own, and it's not art-house expensive. Show the whole world where your gaming heart is! — Kevin Steele



Above: Four of the "bit-mapped" pendant designs available
Below: Two of the arcade wall hangings, and a "Kong" joystick topper



Doctor Who

Light Bar Mod

Bask in an Evil Red Glow

by Brad Molony

Price: AU \$34 (about \$30 US)

Email: pinballbrad@internode.on.net

No matter how great a game is, there's always something that can be improved. At least, that's the philosophy of a "modder," someone who tweaks their games by adding new features, fixing design flaws, or just making the gameplay experience a bit more "flashy."

This mod definitely falls into the "flashy" category. A new light bar for the Dalek topper found on almost all Dr. Who pinball machines, this mod replaces the original incandescent bulbs with low-heat LEDs.

This alone would be a nice mod, but we're not done yet: there are two sets of LEDs on the light bar: white LEDs for general illumination, and red LEDs that flash when the Dalek is "speaking" during gameplay, bathing the Dalek model in a red glow.

Oh, and the red LEDs aren't the only thing flashing: the white LEDs flash whenever the Doctor is speaking (or anytime any of the backbox flashers flash, for that matter). I found it a bit distracting, as the Dalek topper is almost continuously flashing during gameplay. It does ramp up the pinball's light show, though! You can reduce the flashing by switching where the light bar is grounded.

The kit is "plug and play" simple to install: just unplug the old light bar, screw in the new bar, and plug it in according to the directions. It's a cheap, effective lighting enhancement that also helps to keep the heat levels down in the topper.

And besides, you should see how creepy the Dalek looks when he's glowing blood red...

— Kevin Steele



Above: The light board uses a mix of white LEDs for general illumination of the Dalek head, and red LEDs to emphasize when the Dalek is "speaking"



Above: The original light bar (left), and the new LED-based light bar (right)
Below: A Dalek in action, rotating his eye stalk as he basks in his evil red glow



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Auction Watch

by Tim Ferrante and Scott Voisin

Caveat Emptor, eBay Edition

EBay has come a long way in the thirteen years it's been in operation, but for all of the advances that have been made since then, the site continues to lack one important element that is vital to its survival: Keeping buyers from getting ripped off.

It seems like once every three years or so, I run into a problem with a seller who doesn't want to send me what I bought and paid for. Like clockwork, it happened again right before Christmas. I found some Pittsburgh Steelers decals that I thought would make a nice stocking-stuffer for my daughter. Using the *Buy It Now* option, I sent payment through PayPal on December 4th.

Days went by and I received nothing. As the days turned into weeks, I sent the seller a few e-mails politely asking when I could expect the decals. I never received a response, nor did I receive the merchandise. On January 3rd, nearly a month after paying and with no hope in sight of getting anything, I decided enough was enough. I filed a dispute with eBay and left a negative feedback for the deadbeat seller. Amazingly, within two hours, the seller responded by leaving a negative feedback for me.

I found it interesting that my e-mails went unanswered, but as soon as I left a bad critique, she was very quick to respond. After that, I decided to do a little digging. I discovered that in one month's time, this seller had racked up over forty negatives, and all of them complained of items never received and no responses to inquiries. And in every one of those cases, the ripped-off buyers had negative feedback left for them in retaliation by the seller. If this woman had been as vigilant in sending packages as she was in leaving negative feedback, she would probably be the top seller on eBay.

With the overwhelmingly bad response to this seller's activities, I was shocked that she still had an open account. As a buyer, if you get three negatives for failing to pay, your account is suspended. This loser had stiffed forty people in thirty days and was still allowed to conduct business. That's when it dawned on me... This lady was a power seller, a status designated by eBay for those who list a high volume of items each and every month. By selling so much merchandise, she was generating a lot of money for eBay with listings and final value fees.

I understand that a company is in business to make money, but when that money comes at the expense of honest people who play by the rules, something has to be done. Eventually, people will get tired of dealing with this kind of behavior, and if a competitor can come along and offer folks a better alternative, people will flock to it.

I, for one, am keeping my eyes open.

— Scott Voisin



Coin-Op Auction Results (Compiled from eBay®)

AMAZING SALES!

Gottlieb Silver pinball machine \$5100
Williams Jungle pinball machine \$2839
Bally KISS pinball machine \$2480
Wurlitzer 800 jukebox \$9000
Jennings Silver Dollar Standard Chief slot \$5104
Play Meter magazine w/KISS flyer insert \$147
Automatic Age magazine July 1938 \$181

PINBALL MACHINES

Dyno-Mite \$213
Family Guy \$3889
Banzai Run \$1963
Judge Dredd \$1600
The Simpsons (Data East) \$1675
Fireball II \$1595
The Flintstones \$1400
Super Mario Bros. \$1375
Xenon \$1400
Taxi \$845
Cirque Voltaire \$3850
Theatre of Magic \$3295
Tales of the Arabian Nights \$2850
Indiana Jones \$3151
Star Wars Episode I \$2999
The Machine-Bride of Pinbot \$2350
Star Wars (Data East) \$2088
Black Knight 2000 \$1027
Dirty Harry \$1026

JUKEBOXES

Seeburg A \$4428
Wurlitzer 2000 \$6250
Seeburg 148 \$1600
Rowe Storm (CD wall) \$1201
Rowe Berkeley (CD wall) \$1176
Seeburg J \$2700
AMI K \$800
Rowe Model F CD-100 \$875
NSM Firebird CD wallmount \$710
Rowe Model A CD-100 \$818
Seeburg C \$3850
Seeburg G \$1975

SLOT MACHINES

Pace Double Jackpot 25¢ \$2500
Watling Rol-A-Top 5¢ \$4170
Mills Castle Front 5¢ \$1526
Watling Treasury 5¢ \$4500
Jennings Standard Chief 50¢ \$2700
Jennings "Sportsman" Club Special 5¢ \$2077
Mills Black Cherry 5¢ \$1638
Mills Bursting Cherry 5¢ \$1550

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Pole Position II \$499
Phoenix \$305
Tekken 3 \$305
Deer Hunting USA \$291
Breeder's Cup \$1299
Berserk \$510
Megatouch Diamond \$500
Area 51 Site 4 \$405
Donkey Kong \$550
Golden Tee Fore! \$1155
Galaga \$1100
San Francisco Rush s/d \$760
Hydro Thunder (s/d) \$1790
Arcade Legends \$1750
Burger Time \$1500
Carnival King \$1350
Marvel VS. Capcom \$1275

PAPER

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Big Buck Hunter Pro rifle \$4450
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Swami Fortune Teller napkin dispenser \$400
Ice Cream Truck kiddie ride \$999
United Laguna shuffle bowler \$2000

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Two great events were commemorated in recent months that deserve special notice in the pages of Game Room magazine. Todd Rogers noted the 25th Anniversary of his “impossible” score on Dragster, and John Lawton’s Depth Charge score almost got to the 30-year mark before it was beaten—a world record time for a video game mark. Here is a special commemorative poster created by Caroline and Gregory Hoose of Digital Visions to help Twin Galaxies honor this great milestone.

Twin Galaxies is proud to posthumously honor John Lawton, of the Funspot Family Fun Ctr., in Weirs Beach, NH, for holding the “Longest-Held Video Game World Record.” While also holding the record as oldest video game champion, Lawton has held the Depth Charge arcade title from November 30, 1977 until November 18, 2007—a span of time that was twelve days short of 30 complete years. His record of 4,660 points was beaten by Martin Bedard of St. Lazare, PQ, Quebec, who scored a new record of 4,770 points. In signing this Commemorative poster, it is Twin Galaxies’ heartfelt belief that John’s record will stand in our hearts forever.

Get the latest official high scores anytime at: www.twingalaxies.com



Twin Galaxies is also proud to honor Todd Rogers, of Brooksville, FL, for achieving a "World Record That was Thought Impossible." On September 1, 1982, Rogers achieved a fast time of 5.51 seconds on the classic Atari 2600 title "Dragster." What made this record unique is that the game was designed to only allow a maximum fast time of 5.54 seconds, and no faster. Rogers was able to score this impossible time by devising a way to "pop the clutch" in a manner unforeseen by the Activision game designers and beat the computer by 3/100ths of a second. It is Twin Galaxies' heartfelt belief that Todd's unique record will stand forever. **GR**



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Since 1990, we have sold over 11,000 individual games, with established regular and returning clientele base. We receive more than 2,000 distinct individuals each year — over 3 1/2 million UNIQUE visitors to the website since its inception.

The company has a FANTASTIC reputation and name recognition. Being online before retro-gaming became fashionable, and coupled with sponsorship and appearances at dozens of videogame expos, people know our brand name. Web domain name is very established. Any Google or Alta Vista search for keywords such as "Classic Videogame" or "Classic Videogames" ranks us in the top 40, netting such admirable positions as #1, #4, #14, #19 and #36 out of over 20 million results. Furthermore, the organization has an unheard of 7+ year FLAWLESS 100% Positive Feedback report from B-ay.

In addition to our inventory and reputation, we are a destination spot for video gamers. The website has over 400 pages of content (articles, interviews, social networking, comics, etc) that draw visitors to the website, thus increasing sales.

Do not want to sell business, but personal responsibilities expanded with long-term illness and death of father. As a result, I became primary caretaker for disabled mother, sister & siblings, in addition to my own personal family.

The plan can easily be modified to work as a traditional "brick and mortar" operation in any town, while still accepting online orders for additional revenues. If a new owner were to focus on the business full time, the rewards could be even more amazing!

Serious inquiries contact (716) 649-4653. Ask for Michael. Thank you! (38)

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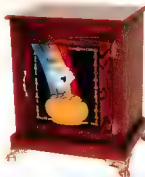
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THE LAST WORD

by Kevin Steele

A Token of My Affection

While reading about Peter Hirshberg's fantastic game room in this issue, I was pleasantly surprised to notice the fact that he has all the games set to require quarters to play, and even has a change dispenser. It seems he's a man after my own heart when it comes to arcade gaming, as he shares one of my main philosophies about playing coin-op games: namely, that there needs to be a coin involved.

All of my games are set up to run on tokens instead of quarters, but the basic idea is the same: you need to put something into the machine to make it work. Tokens or quarters are a vital part of the experience.

I discovered this when I bought my first pinball machine. It was set on free-play, which was a new experience for me: just step up and push start. Very cool, I thought! Then I won my first free game... and it meant nothing. Just a thunk. No number on the credits, and no feeling of having actually won anything real at all.

One of the ways you counted your victories in the arcades was by how many tokens or quarters you still had left when it was time to go home—better game skills meant more money in your pocket, literally. Winning a free game meant you had one more token in your pocket at the end of the day. A token was a physical object that linked you to the game in more ways than one.

Tokens add a vital dimension to the home arcade experience: not only does the sound of a token dropping into the coin slot bring back powerful memories, but many of the tokens themselves can also evoke echoes of the past—I have a huge fishbowl full of tokens, many of which I've bought in bulk from vendors on eBay. These are tokens from shuttered arcades, many of which I recognize.

I often wander down to the game room during the day (hey, I write about home gaming, it's one of the benefits!) and limit myself to two or three tokens. It's a tangible, physical way to limit my own game time, while at the same time leaving myself a loophole for longer play (if I can earn it!) I also have the advantage of controlling my children's time



on the games as well: all I have to do is take away the fishbowl of tokens. (I've never done it, but I could, I swear!)

Many other collectors have discovered the magic of the token: the "Build Your Own Arcade Controls" (BYOAC) online community has an annual contest to create a token design, which then gets minted and sold to the group. I've collected them each year, and

I've even had my own GameRoom tokens minted as promotional giveaways (unlike business cards, these tokens will stick around for years!)

There's something solid and permanent about tokens: the arcades that they were used in may have long since faded away, but the humble token lives on, a lasting reminder of a treasured era gone by. **GR**



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